













**Documents  
of the History  
of the Communist  
Party of India**

**Volume VII**

**1948—1950**

**Edited by  
M. B. RAO**



**PEOPLE'S PUBLISHING HOUSE  
New Delhi**

**First Printing, January, 1960**

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**Printed by Jiten Sen at the New Age Printing Press, Rani Jhansi Road,  
New Delhi 110055, and published by him for People's Publishing  
House (P) Ltd., Rani Jhansi Road, New Delhi 110055.**

## INTRODUCTION

The period covered by this volume, 1948 to 1950, was a turningpoint in the life of our country. If at all the phrase that had become hackneyed in our writings—that it was a period “of greatest opportunity and greatest danger”—was ever true it was in those years. At a crucial time when the greatest advance could have been made, when the party could have gone forward with seven-league boots, it was precisely then that it was found wanting. This entire period falls into two parts—from the second party congress to January 1950 when B. T. Ranadive was the general secretary and from June to December 1950 when C. Rajeswara Rao was the general secretary.

The errors of this period are threefold—theoretical, strategical-tactical and organisational. The contents of this volume are highly polemical and these three errors have been successively criticised by the three trends that came into existence in this period. Here only brief comments are necessary.

### I

By far the most important and fundamental mistake was made in the field of theory. All Marxists believe that theory is the guide to action, without the light of theory you only grope in the dark. Not that sometimes life does not march ahead of theory. That is when all communists are on trial—when they have to understand and substantiate theoretically problems solved by life itself.

The genius of Lenin solved the theoretical problems that came up before, during and after the first world war. He had theoretically substantiated the possibility of the victory of proletarian revolution in an individual country,

years before it took place. Until then it was firmly held that a socialist revolution to be viable should take place in many countries simultaneously, and first of all in advanced countries.

The Russian revolution was followed by revolutions in other European countries but they all failed. That is why in 1920 Lenin warned that while many of the fundamental features of the Russian revolution have international significance, "it would be grossly erroneous to exaggerate this truth and extend it beyond certain fundamental features". He also emphasised that each country would make its own revolution in its own peculiar specific way depending on the concrete conditions. Therefore the controversies in our party in this period whether we should follow the Russian or Chinese model led to nothing.

Fascist oppression in occupied countries brought into being very wide fighting fronts which included not only communists but those of all antifascist classes, forces, parties and all genuine patriots. The demands of everyday struggle did not leave much time for theoretical study of what would follow after victory.

The victories of the Red Army and the end of the anti-fascist war once again proved true Engels's scientific prophecy of 1888: "devastation...famine...hopeless confusion in trade, industry and credit...collapse of old states...crowns will roll by dozens on the pavement and there will be nobody to pick them up...absolute impossibility of foreseeing how it will all end...establishment of conditions for the ultimate victory of the working class." This is what exactly happened. There were no more kings and kingdoms, the parties and forces that had fought fascism came to power. Not only in the region liberated by the Red Army but also in the Anglo-American-French zones popular forces including communists took over the reins of government.

It is a matter of history that communists were thrown out of government in France and Italy due to the machinations and direct intervention of US imperialism. But

where the Red Army helped directly and decisively the antifascist forces to emerge victorious a new type of state came into existence in which all antifascist forces from the antifascist section of the bourgeoisie to the working class took part. What was this state, what was the line of its motion?—nobody knew. These were worked out in the next two or three years. Theory was brought up to date with practice.

In the postwar period, British imperialism had become very weak internationally, its main props were crumbling inside our country. All the three branches of the armed forces as well as the police were seething with revolt, the people were surging forward in mighty anti-imperialist demonstrations, the working class was entering the stage of prolonged and bitterly fought strike struggles—both political and economic, the peasantry was fighting heroically for land and against landlord oppression, and in the princely states the people were up in arms against feudalism and for democratic advance.

In such a situation British imperialism found it could no longer hold India in bondage—unless it was prepared to reconquer it. It had to withdraw and hand over power to the class on which it could to a certain extent rely. It even advanced the date of withdrawal. The leading parties in India, the Congress and the Muslim League, had not given a call for any struggle for independence nor had wholeheartedly supported the upsurge in the armed forces, the people, the working class, the peasantry or the states' people. In this situation it seemed that our independence was "automatic" or a "gift".

While in occupied Europe the communist parties had come out of the war with enhanced prestige, quite the opposite was seen in our country. In spite of its glorious role in the postwar period, taking advantage of certain mistakes in the people's war period and dishonestly appropriating the glory of the Quit India struggle, the bourgeoisie to an extent succeeded in isolating the Communist Party, in throwing it out of the Congress, in splitting the



workingclass movement through the INTUC and the states' people's struggle through the State Congress.

British imperialism while retreating partitioned our country. Ireland was reenacted in India. Imperialism later made it a worldwide policy—e.g. Germany, Korea, Vietnam were all partitioned into two warring parts. This was a manoeuvre to weaken the two parts and put them at loggerheads so as to salvage whatever it could.

On 15 August 1947 power was transferred to the whole bourgeoisie. At that point of time the differentiation between the big bourgeoisie and the national bourgeoisie had not yet taken place. It happened later with the development of all the contradictions of the capitalist path of development. It took tangible political shape only in 1969 when the Congress itself split.

But what happened on 15th August? Was it independence? This was a vexed question until 1955 when we agreed that it was independence. Meanwhile different interpretations were given not only by our party but also by international communist circles.

The 1947 June CC resolution called it an advance and a weapon in the hands of the people but not complete freedom. On 3 August 1947 the CPI dedicated "itself anew to fight ... to win complete independence for our country", and naively to "establish fraternal cooperation between India and Pakistan as a first step towards voluntary reunion of our motherland"! Zhdanov in his report to the nine-party conference said: "they are seeking to keep India and China under the sway of imperialism and in continued political and economic bondage". An editorial in *People's Age* of 21 January 1948 said, it was a "blasphemous lie to assert that freedom has been achieved ... national leadership has accepted sham freedom". The draft thesis for the second party congress called it a "deal struck with imperialism ... and proclaimed ... as independence and freedom". The editorial of *Lasting Peace* dated 27 January 1950 said, "a sham independence bestowed on India". What blinded us to reality was dogmatism.

The correlation of the three class forces in power—imperialism, feudalism and bourgeoisie—was successively described in various ways. First it was an imperialist manoeuvre to extend its base by compromising with the bourgeoisie and transferring to the latter political power while economic bondage continued. Indian bourgeoisie had become a "junior partner" in the exploitation of the country.

Later when the party started to organise wideranging actions and the government let loose severe repression, the junior partner became the driving force in the imperialist-bourgeois-feudal combine.

After the editorial in *Lasting Peace* of 27 January 1950 the emphasis was on imperialist and feudal reaction—and there was talk of uniting with the national bourgeoisie, though that section had not yet properly crystallised. This was the position until the end of the year—with the December 1950 CC meeting, and its statement which is the last document in this volume.

It is well known that a communist party cannot draw its strategy and tactics without theoretical analysis. So in both the periods before and after the *Lasting Peace* editorial an attempt at an analysis of the state power was made.

This analysis was carried out in the most peculiar manner. Not on the basis of a concrete study of the concrete situation but on the basis of quotations from Lenin and Stalin and later from Mao and Chinese leaders.

It is no secret that Lenin's writings are highly dialectical and quotations can be found to "explain" any situation any time anywhere in the world—if only we forget the occasion and the context in which it was written.

Our leaders did not understand Lenin's method but desperately hung on to his words. They changed his dialectics into Euclidean theorems to be "applied" to Indian conditions. A suitable "theorem" was chosen, the facts as imagined by the leaders were fitted into it, and then all that was needed was to write QED. It was all done and over! Lenin

always exhorted—"investigate, study, seek, divine, grasp that which is peculiarly national, especially national, in the concrete manner in which each country is to approach the fulfilment of the tasks common to all".

Problems were solved with historic parallels. In the first period Nehru was Kerensky, 15th August was February, revolution, insurrection maturing, hey presto! we march to socialism. After the *Lasting Peace* editorial Nehru was Chiang Kai-shek, 15th August was China's 1927, the peasant army was marching with steady steps to liberate the cities and establish a new democracy. But this second appearance of historical personages, as Marx once said, ended as a farce.

## II

From erroneous theoretical conclusions naturally followed mistakes in strategy and tactics.

In the first period the strategy was defined schematically in Stalin's terms—strikes, agrarian struggles, general strikes, political strikes, rising to higher forms, ending in insurrection and capture of power—leading to socialism.

This was a revolution on paper. No doubt attempts were made to bring about strikes and turn them into a single all-India general strike with the 9th March (1949) railway strike as the pivot. The government attacked with ferocious repression, indiscriminate arrests and firing. *Crossroads* of 13 May 1949 said, 25,000 were detained and 50,000 were under trial. Thus after the 9th March fiasco all the effective cadres were in jail and all the links of the underground leadership with the masses were severed. The calls for strikes, general strikes and confrontations with the army and police continued to be given, but there was nobody to hear them, and the working class just turned its back thinking that the leaders had gone delirious.

When there was no hope of any revolution outside, insurrection entered the walls of the jails. Instructions were sent to fight militantly for each and every footling demand.

Prolonged hungerstrikes were forced on the jailed comrades and they were incited to resist most militantly. They faced 11 firings and innumerable lathicharges—and according to *Crossroads* of 24 February 1950, 84 died in the firing in the prisons and a large number injured.

Whatever forces outside were egged on to, break all restrictions, attack jail gates and many comrades died on the streets, shot down by the police. *Crossroads* of 20 July 1951 gives the following figures: firings—1982, killed 3784, wounded—10,000.

When all these adventurist actions were going on the leadership quoted Lenin on the inadvisability of throwing the vanguard into action before the whole class is ready to take part. Long quotations and homilies were given on petty-bourgeois revolutionism. The ranks were hypnotised into believing what the party leaders were asking them to do was pure bolshevism. Sometimes the ranks in their enthusiasm went far ahead of even what the leaders wanted.

Thus before the *Lasting Peace* editorial the Ranadive leadership had reached a deadend, and totally collapsed after it.

The sectarian banner from the hands of the fallen leaders was taken by the CC reconstituted in June 1950. This leadership changed the Russian path to the Chinese path. Its arguments and theories are given in the documents of 1950.

In short it advocated that the centre of struggle had shifted to the countryside, so in the cities under white terror the working class should only fight small economic struggles, while in the countryside armed struggle would take place, peasant armies would march, liberate the cities and a new democracy would be established.

This was the Telangana way. But what is Telangana? The people's upsurge all over India in 1946 had not left the feudal stronghold of Hyderabad unaffected. There too a movement started for the right of the Telugu people

to use their own language and for civil liberties—under the leadership of the Andhra Mahasabha where the CPI became an increasingly influential force. This spread all over the state and brought political awakening and cohesion everywhere. The struggle for elementary demands merged with the demands of the peasantry against feudal oppression and levies, against forced labour and for land to the tiller.

With the transfer of power in the rest of India, the State Congress started the flag movement for hoisting the national tricolour on public buildings and holding meetings. The nizam came down with terrific repression, and also let loose armed razakars on the people.

An Action Committee was formed to head the merger movement in November 1947 which gave a call for an armed militia of the people. In the same month the India government signed a standstill agreement with the nizam.

The State Congress rejected all proposals of the nizam and its radical section along with the Andhra Mahasabha went into armed resistance of the forces of feudal desh-mukhs, razakars and the nizam. When charges of violence were made against the communists in the Andhra Mahasabha the State Congress repudiated them in January 1948. The same month K. M. Munshi was appointed India's agent-general in Hyderabad.

He struck a deal with the nizam and brought pressure to bear on the State Congress leaders so that the same leaders started condemning "communist violence" in March 1948.

Meanwhile the Andhra Mahasabha with the CPI in the leadership had liberated some 4000 villages and distributed 10 lakh acres of land, set up village panchayats, the power of the nizam and deshmukhs was broken and ended by the peasant guerillas. The downtrodden peasantry fought with indomitable courage and with the greatest sacrifice and were most skilfully and heroically led by the communists. Telangana represents the peak point of armed mass action for freedom.

At that time when the nizam's gaddi was tottering the Indian army marched into Hyderabad in September 1948 ostensibly to put down razakar atrocities and bring democracy to Hyderabad. In reality the entire move was against the liberated areas and the fighting peasants. On the entry of Indian troops the razakars laid down arms and fled.

This was a crucial moment when the fate of Telangana had to be decided. Should the peasant guerillas also lay down arms and go back to peaceful legal forms of struggle? The central leadership gave a one-word command—"Resist"!

But by then a political change had come over the entire area. The people hoped and believed that they would have a better deal at the hands of the India government. They were ready to fight the nizam but not the India government headed by the national leaders.

Telangana got isolated and from a broad agrarian movement became the armed force of the area organisation. There was dwindling support in the villages, the earlier broad unity with the radical section of the State Congress was disrupted, the agrarian reforms promised by the new rulers broke the peasant unity. The fighting peasant squads retreated into the forests for sheer survival. In the unequal battles the isolated squads were decimated until October 1951 when the glorious Telangana movement was finally withdrawn.

Thus the June CC was giving a call for enacting Telangana all over the country in the name of the Chinese path when the very existence of the Telangana struggle was in great danger.

A third trend which was a critique of the June CC line was put forward by Ajoy Ghosh, S. A. Dange and S. V. Ghate in their document. It also accepted the line advocated by the *Lasting Peace* editorial, but would not wholly accept the Chinese path, not because it was wrong but because the party at the moment was weak, the illusions of the people were great, the workingclass struggles in the cities still had a big role to play, the time was not

ripe to go in for armed struggle. But they also thought that Telangana was right and should be defended at all costs.

At the end of 1950 these two trends deadlocked, and though a united CC was formed, it could not come to any agreed conclusions. The scheduled 15-day meeting dispersed within a week and representatives of both trends went abroad for consultation. The new programme and tactics that were the result of this belong rightly to the next volume.

### III

In the field of organisation too grave errors were made. Here also in the name of Lenin all Leninist principles of party organisation were grossly violated and distorted.

The central committee elected at the second party congress did not even meet once until May-June 1950, when those who were still free and against whom no action had been taken met for the first time. That means for nearly two and a half years there was no collective functioning in the party. It was the general secretary who functioned assisted by one or two polit bureau members in the name of the PB. Even in conditions of utmost terror, no communist party can properly function at the whims of an individual or two.

This small coterie ruled the party with the help of intimidation. The demotion of CC members, reorganisation of provincial committees, the suspension of entire district committees, the spate of expulsions—all created a deplorable situation.

A suffocating atmosphere of suspicion, intrigue and fear was created in the party, destroying all feelings of comradeship. Tremendous damage was done to the basic fabric of the party, apart from decimation of its members. The party was brought to the verge of collapse. The membership fell drastically to 20,000 from 89,000 at the time of the second party congress.

## IV

Any one of the three errors we made in this period would have been enough to finish off any ordinary party. In fact many thought that the Communist Party was already dead but for the mourning!

When the line was changed and the party went to the masses again we find the party rising like a phoenix from the ashes. In the 1952 general election Ravi Narayan Reddy, one of the heroes of Telangana but still a local leader, got the highest number of votes in the whole country, and in the parliament the Communist Party won the second place and became the main opposition group.

Why and how did this happen?—because our party is the party of the working class, the party of all toilers, the party of the most oppressed. They have no other reliable friend, supporter and leader than the Communist Party. They were for a time bewildered and confused by the policy and practice of their party. When they did not approve of any policy, like the repeated general strike calls or for starting guerilla warfare under impossible conditions, the masses just turned their back to the party.

It has to be noted also that even when totally wrong the party did not forsake its class and masses. Its members stood by them, fought with them, suffered with them and if necessary took the first bullet on their own chest. Our martyrs are enshrined in the great heart of the working class and all toilers.

But once the party was on correct rails the masses surged forward with support and love like the mother clasping to her breast a wayward child that has seen the error of its ways. That is why while all other parties disappear one time or another, the Communist Party never dies. It is immortal.



## V

Perhaps a few comments are necessary on the role of comments on India in the literature of brother parties. Foreign commentators have done a lot of research to find out who said what and where, and what effect it had on the policies of the party. American "specialists" have taken great pains in this direction to prove that the Communist Party was time and again given "directives" and "orders" from abroad, especially Moscow, in order to malign our party as a "foreign agent".

The Communist Party has never concealed the fact that we are both a national and international force. Just as capitalists learn new methods of production and exploitation from their friends abroad, we also try to learn from the experience of our friends how to safeguard the interests of workers and all toilers, how to advance the cause of socialism to which our party is dedicated.

Having said this, it has to be emphasised that it is totally false to say that any communist party receives orders from another. At the very beginning when the communist movement was just emerging in many countries the Communist International played the role of a single world communist party with a section in each country which had to implement the decisions commonly arrived at by the Comintern congresses. But this aspect had been getting weaker and weaker as the national parties grew and matured, until with the outbreak of the second world war it became impossible to keep any contact with each other and the Comintern itself was soon dissolved.

From then on there has not been any world directing centre. Exchange of experience and opinion, which are not binding on anybody, has taken place bilaterally and multilaterally.

Therefore the accusation of being an "agent" is false and made with an ulterior motive by reactionary impe-

rialist agencies and their henchmen who are unable to fight the communists and their policies openly, and have to take recourse to subterfuges to confuse the ignorant and the gullible. Our own experience in this period shows that our leaders took only that "advice" which fitted in with their own preconceived notions and discarded all else, even to the extent of maligning most of the brother parties.

Much has been made also of various discussions and controversies in academic circles in Moscow, whose proceedings reached us more often than not long after we had taken a particular stand, and many times entirely based on our own documents. One can only laugh at the deliberate and calculated naivete of bourgeois scholars when they say Zhukov was critical of and Balabushevich was supporting the Indian party's line.

Of course the documents of that period bristle with quotations. Appropriate quotations can be found and were found to explain anything and for every occasion. This is very convenient for literary work. But for political struggle where rapid independent decisions have to be made there is nothing more insidious than such quotations especially if no allowances are made for the time and conditions when they first saw the light of day.

For example, there is nothing easier during an offensive than to find a convincing quotation about the importance of retreat and during an ebb in the movement to go to extremes reinforcing one's recklessness with the fireworks of the most excellent quotations from the days of offensive action. These are the weapons of a dogmatic mind.

Lastly one accusation has to be firmly and resolutely rebuffed. That is—that aberrations are a built-in characteristic of all parties, that Marxism-Leninism is not what it achieves but the mistakes made in its name. It is true that there is not a single party which can say it has not made mistakes of one kind or another. But the source of

mistakes is not our theory, but our lack of it. Communist parties do not function in a vacuum nor in a sterilised atmosphere. The baseness of the life around constantly seeps into the party if it is not vigilant. And when they masquerade as Marxism-Leninism these evils become the most dangerous. Sometimes the enemy outside is not so dangerous as those who pose as friends, alien tendencies that proclaim themselves as "bolshevism", especially when they are able to deceive others for however short a time. But they are always found out and exposed by practice and the defence mechanism inside the party itself.

## VI

The paper work during this period has been enormous, of which about 200 documents running to over 4800 cycloed pages and about half more printed are available in the party archives. This would come to about 6400 printed pages at the very least. It had been planned to select important documents up to 600 or 650 printed pages to make a tidy volume. In spite of cutting out long quotations from earlier documents and contemporary or not very relevant foreign material, when the work was half through it was found the volume would exceed the set limit. The later documents of 1949 onwards were abridged slightly, the last but one document of 1950, the June CC tactical line, was drastically cut to three sections and a portion of one more from 110 cycloed pages. One or two not so important documents that had been originally selected were dropped. Moreover the documents of 1951 which really round up the controversies of the period have been transferred to the next volume. Still the size has become nearly double what was planned.

The readers of this volume will miss the crisp yet erudite commentary and notes of Adhikari. It is hoped that this lack will be more than compensated by the fact that this deals with contemporary history of which many participants are in the land of the living.

In the selection of the material Adhikari's suggestions and guidance have been invaluable and ungrudgingly given. Mohit Sen has been the driving force behind this volume, but for his help, enthusiasm and constant pressure perhaps this volume would have been indefinitely delayed. The unremitting and devoted labour of Subodh Roy and my other colleagues has cut the normal production time to one-fourth. Whatever is good in the volume belongs to them all.

M. B. RAO



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# 1948

## **POLITICAL THESIS**

### **1. THE INTERNATIONAL SITUATION**

The defeat of Hitler Germany and fascist Japan in the second world war has completely altered the international landscape and moved the balance decisively in favour of the working class and its revolutionary movement. Though the elimination of powerful rivals like Germany and Japan might appear to have strengthened other imperialist powers, the total result is not the strengthening of the world imperialist system but its immense weakening; not the strengthening of American imperialism but its tremendous weakening before the world revolutionary movement; not the strengthening of the capitalist world but the strengthening of the socialist world and of the movements and people heading towards socialism and national emancipation.

These results are to be seen in the direct increase in the power and strength of the revolutionary forces.

The imperialist expectation of a tremendous weakening

Adopted at the second congress, 28 February to 6 March 1948, Calcutta; first printed in July 1948.

of the Soviet Union, its economic collapse and chaos after the war has not only not materialised, but the contrary has come true.

In spite of the tremendous slaughter of manpower and the most devastating destruction of resources, the Soviet Union has come out stronger—an object of admiration for the people and a great rallying point for the working class and the masses in the struggle against capital. The might of its arms creates confidence among the masses of all countries and shatters the myth of the invincibility of imperialist arms.

Not only the military, but also the economic, organisational and industrial prestige of the Soviet Union has increased tremendously, and the people in capitalist countries contrast the planned organised life in the Soviet Union with the anarchy in capitalist society.

Secondly, the rise in eastern Europe of people's democracies—where power belongs to the people, where large-scale industry, transport and the banks are owned by the state and where a bloc of the labouring classes of the population headed by the working class constitutes the leading force—is another big blow to world capitalism. It takes away a population equal in number to that of Britain and France put together and a big territory from the orbit of capitalism, and puts it firmly on the path to socialism.

By tearing these countries out of the orbit of the imperialist-capitalist world, by establishing people's democracies in them, which shatter the political and economic power of the exploiting classes, by organising states which embody the sovereignty of the people based on the alliance of workers, peasants and oppressed middle classes, and by strengthening the world socialist sector, the east-European democracies further widen the breach created by the Russian revolution in 1917.

The strengthening of the revolutionary movement of the working class and the weakening of capitalism is further seen on the European continent in the immense rise in the

strength of the communist parties—the vanguard of the working class—and in the growing unification of the class around them. The rise of the Italian and French communist parties, apart from those in eastern Europe, was the logical conclusion of the great role they played in the revolutionary struggle against fascism.

A measure of this immense strength is to be obtained not only by the immense growth in party membership, but in the growth of the mass organisations led by the parties, in the parliamentary successes scored—with the communist parties often coming out as the biggest single parties.

The rise of the communist parties in the countries epitomises the strength of the working class and the instability of the present regimes and the maturity of the revolutionary developments. It shows that before the parties of the right can restore the prewar capitalist balance, economically and politically, before the ruling class can successfully throw the burdens of the crisis on the working class, it will have to wage big battles against the workers—battles in which the workingclass strength is immense and great. It shows that the working class is in a position to defeat the new offensive and solve the revolutionary tasks of the present period.

Europe for the capitalists is on the brink of a disaster. In Britain, it is the labour government that stands between the mounting discontent and the capitalist rule. In America, which is getting more and more in the mire of the crisis, which is hungrily searching for markets all over the world and is attacking the living standard of its own people and the freedom of other nations—the crisis opens new battles between the financial autocrats and the common people.

The successful struggle for Chinese liberation that is being waged under the leadership of the Chinese Communist Party strikes another powerful blow at the world imperialist order, threatening to alter the political landscape of Asia and preparing the way of throwing the imperialists and their agents out of the colonies. The growing

roust of Chiang Kai-shek's armies and the fiasco of the policy of American imperialism unmistakably show that the imperialist policies and aims come up everywhere against insuperable obstacles in the shape of people struggling for freedom.

### *The Role of Rightwing Social-Democrats*

In this new and decisive period of revolutionary developments, the rightwing social-democrats, the traditional hangers-on of the bourgeoisie, come forward with their usual treacherous role as the lackeys and servitors of the bourgeoisie.

In the period of antifascist war, the social-democratic leaders of France, Britain, etc. found themselves in the people's camp, along with their capitalist masters, who were compelled to join it. They joined it after they had slandered the Soviet Union, supported the munichites, disrupted the popular front, split the ranks of the working class and had seen the utter fiasco of the foreign policy of their masters.

In the course of the war, the social-democratic leaders sabotaged the revolutionary armed liberation struggles against the fascists, joining their imperialist masters, firstly, in relying on the Anglo-American invading armies and, secondly, in supporting the old reactionary imperialist agents (Badoglio, Mihailovitch, Mikolajczyk, etc.) as against the people's liberation movements. Thus they acted as a brake on the initiative of the masses.

Today when in each country the question of fight against capitalist rule is being decisively posed, the rightwing social-democrats, as true reformists, come out in favour of the capitalist order, as its defenders and apologists, as a hypocritical 'third force' directing its fire on the working class and the communist party.

In the postwar elections they capitalised the discontent of the masses against the traditional bourgeois parties and secured majorities in parliaments (Britain); they capitalis-

ed the prestige which the participation of their ranks in the antifascist struggle had won for them to get into governments and split the ranks of the working class.

The social-democratic leaders, in conformity with the needs of their capitalist masters, follow a policy of attacking the living standards of the working class, of throwing the burdens of the crisis on the workers, of engaging in a mad hunt for markets, suppress the working class and the people, attack democratic rights, pursue an anti-Soviet, antisocialist and antirevolutionary policy—a policy of defending the capitalist order and taking the people to another war.

The rightwing social-democratic leaders have also emerged as the initiators of plans of bestial suppression, of fullscale wars against subject peoples in revolt at the end of the war. They have combined their military suppression with new forms of imperialist enslavement of subject peoples in alliance with native bourgeois classes, mis-called 'independence'. The British labour government has granted such fake 'independence' to India, Pakistan, Burma, etc.

The socialist government of France, in defence of the French empire, is suppressing with armed force the Vietnamese people's struggle for freedom. The Dutch socialists are fully supporting Dutch imperialism's colonial war in Indonesia.

The rightwing social-democratic leaders, under the dictates of American imperialism, conspire with the reactionaries in throwing communist parties out of government, in forming stop-gap coalitions with bourgeois parties to open the way to reactionary regimes, throw themselves on the mercy of American money and loans to maintain the present order and lend their influence to combat the growing wave of revolutionary discontent. Antisovietism, anti-communism, defence of capitalism, become the keys to understand the policies of the social-democratic leadership.

### *New Class Alignments*

The close of the antifascist war has thus led to a new constellation of class forces. The old combination, in which certain sections of the bourgeoisie and their reformist hangers-on were found in the people's camp in the common battle against fascism, is replaced by one in which the entire world bourgeoisie, ranged together with its reformist hangers-on and reactionary supporters, is attempting to blend itself together to stem the tide of revolution and oppose the working class, the people, the socialist Soviet Union, the eastern democracies and the colonial peoples.

The impact of economic crisis and the imminent menace of revolution are the basic reasons why the new setup comes into existence and the bourgeois states begin to conspire against the Soviet Union; why Anglo-American imperialism more and more uses its majority in the UNO as a bloc against the democratic nations.

Even during the course of the people's war, the contradiction between the socialist and the capitalist worlds was developing (delay of the second front, Anglo-American intrigue to bleed the Soviet Union and support for reactionaries like Darlan, de Gaulle, Badoglio, etc.). After the end of the war and the sudden release of the economic crisis, the contradiction sharpened immediately.

The basic line of the bourgeois parties in each country, and of their reformist hangers-on, is to fight the revolution at home and abroad. That is why the old setup completely changes. This is what creates two camps—the imperialist antidemocratic camp, and the anti-imperialist democratic camp composed of the Soviet Union, the East-European democracies and the fighting people all over the world.

The leadership of the imperialist camp is in the hands of American imperialism whose strength has immensely grown in relation to its old rivals. It has out-distanced Britain to such an extent that Britain is a supplicant for alms at the American door. It has gained the most from

the elimination of its most powerful rivals, Germany and Japan; this has whetted its appetite for markets. With its territory far from the field of war, it was able to develop its resources quickly in the war period, with the result that today its productive capacity has grown immensely.

With it have grown the lust and need for markets, for domination of colonies so that new fields of investment are opened and strategic war bases are secured, for subordinating every government, whether of a colonial or advanced capitalist country, to stave off the crisis in America.

The rise of the American colossus overriding all other capitalist countries, subordinating nation after nation to its financial rule and operating as the most important factor in determining the policies of the capitalist world, is one of the basic elements in the new situation.

The maintenance and expansion of American imperialism can be achieved only by crushing the freedom and independence of all countries and by establishing fascist reactionary dictatorships all over the world. The necessity of maintaining the old order has forced American imperialism to come out as the open enemy of all mankind.

The role of classes, political parties, leaders and organisations, therefore, must be judged in relation to this basic role of American imperialism.

Simultaneously with this, there has been a flareup in the interimperialist antagonisms. The elimination of Japan and Germany has not solved but intensified the rivalry between Britain and America, and the two come into conflict in almost every part of the world: in the middle east for oil; in southeast Asia and French Indochina; in Europe, the American dollar more and more forces back the British sterling. American imperialism even holds back British big-business' own plans for rebuilding British industry, badly shattered during the war (for instance ship-building), exacting harsh terms in return for its loans: it is by using this whip-hand that it continuously applies its pressure to bring Britain firmly within its imperialist orbit,



reducing it to the status of a second-rate power and its own satellite.

Today, with Britain dependent on America, the rival claims are being adjusted in favour of America—America forcing Britain to pull down or reduce import tariff walls, give wider scope to American trade, accept all kinds of conditions on loans and make Britain's colonies dependent on America. Britain has no choice as long as it continues to remain a capitalist country, and it is forced to trail behind America.

But a solution of the rival claims in this way only worsens the conditions of the British masses and hampers economic development. This will lead to growing consciousness and determination of the British working class to fight the Anglo-American reactionary alliance. Thus the basis of Anglo-American cooperation against the Soviet Union, against democratic revolution, gets weakened by the experience of the masses.

### *Imperialism's Way Out*

Faced with the biggest revolutionary wave menacing its very existence, with the utter collapse of the capitalist order in Europe, with new gains scored by the working class and the people against monopoly capital and with the threatened collapse of capitalist production in America—American imperialism seeks to find a way out of the present crisis in the interests of the capitalist order.

It pushes ahead with its Marshall plan which is essentially directed to build the western bloc, a bloc of reactionary capitalist states in western Europe, bound hand and foot to American imperialism, a reactionary bloc in which the restored industrial belt in western Germany, controlled by American monopolies, acting directly and through the still-surviving fascists, will occupy a central position.

The granting of American credits is directed to succour Europe's collapsing capitalist order and stave off the revolution, while in return these countries are forced to sell

their economic and political independence to American imperialism, offering themselves as outlets for surplus American goods, thus turning themselves increasingly into virtual colonies of the USA.

The Truman doctrine and the Marshall plan based on it serve the needs of American expansion.

Economically, the Marshall plan is a plan of rendering economic assistance by means of American credits to reactionary regimes in Europe. This economic 'assistance' helps American imperialism to find a market for its goods in the country to which such assistance is rendered. American imperialism thus seeks to mitigate the crisis of overproduction in America.

Politically, it is an attempt to bolster up antidemocratic reactionary governments which, relying on reactionary vested interests, can act as stooges of American imperialism and sell the economic and political independence of their countries to American imperialism. American 'assistance' generally means the domination of the political life of the country by American imperialism; sooner or later only those parties remain in power as are prepared to accept the dictates of Washington in their home and foreign policies and crush the democratic and working masses of their own countries.

American imperialism relies on the rightwing social-democrats of certain countries for help, since the parties of the right are already discredited. It relies on the anti-communism, antisovietism and the antirevolutionary policy of the rightwing social-democrats to do its job. Financial measures and immediate relief given by the USA supply a base for the treachery of the rightwing social-democrats. They arm them with a weapon to cheat the masses and to parade before them the necessity of American aid by taking advantage of their starvation and loss of jobs.

The rightwing leaders of reformist parties today are used as the first weapon to split the ranks of the working class and begin the process of setting a country on the road to fascism.

Simultaneously with this, American imperialism goes on arming and strengthening the real fascists like de Gaulle.

It is on the basis of this aid to the collapsing capitalist structure that the American imperialists attempt to draw the rightwing social-democrats and the bourgeois parties into a common front against the Soviet Union, into a western bloc to fight the Soviet Union and eastern democracies. The rebuilding of capitalist fascist Germany and the formation of the western bloc to unleash war and to fight the Soviet Union are integral parts of the imperialist plan to solve the crisis at the expense of the people. The war propaganda now being carried on, the atom bomb threat repeatedly given, and the anti-Soviet slander which has become a part of the bourgeois offensive—all show that imperialism seeks a way out through war, if it can do so.

To achieve this end, the unleashing of a third world war, however, is not easy; for the Marshall plan and its political counterpart, the plan to build a western bloc, can only succeed through destroying the independence and national sovereignty of the countries of western Europe, transforming them into America's colonies; these plans are, therefore, bound to meet and are already meeting with the growing resistance of the democratic forces of Europe, headed by the communist parties and the working class, whose strength can certainly defeat the provocateurs of war.

The Marshall plan is thus imperialism's way out of the crisis, a plan for the enslavement of the world and the colonial fascisation of Europe.

### *In the Colonies*

The postwar revolutionary epoch has brought the colonies to the path of armed struggle against the imperialists and their allies. So powerful are these struggles and so great their revolutionary sweep that the achievement at one stroke of people's democracy (as in the countries of eastern Europe) becomes an immediate attainable objective. The imperialists and their bourgeois collaborators

are overthrown and power passes into the hands of the toiling people led by the working class, which assures not only complete national independence but also the liquidation of the capitalist social order and the building of socialism.

As in the metropolitan countries, so in the colonies, the old imperialist order—the colonial order—was collapsing. Ground down by exploitation and poverty—first by the imperialists and then by the fascists—the people in many countries resisted the imperialists' attempt to come back after Japan's defeat, and fought with arms. Vietnam and Indonesia carried on regular wars of liberation. Burma fought with weapons. India began to see armed struggles, mutinies and fraternisation of the army and the police with the people.

In the centre of this great struggle for colonial liberation stands the glorious fight of the Chinese people, led by the Communist Party and the People's Liberation Army, delivering massive blows against the main bulwark of colonial rule in Asia and the world. People's victory in the Chinese struggle will change the entire shape of Asia and the world, and ensure the doom of the colonial and capitalist order.

Faced with this onrushing tide of revolution, imperialism makes desperate attempts to save the colonial order by seeking new allies with influence and with a mass base, by cheating the colonial people with fake freedom and independence.

In China, American imperialism openly finances the murderous campaign of Chiang Kai-shek—and yet, aware of the fact that the Kuomintang is discredited, makes an attempt to draw other parties into the fight against the communists. But it places its main reliance on the Kuomintang and the armed help given to it.

In Indonesia, it sought to capitalise the vacillations of the bourgeoisie to temporise, defeat and betray the armed struggle of the people.

On the continent of Europe the imperialists first rely on the rightwing social-democrats and then on other parties of the right to achieve their objective. Everywhere their strategic aim is to secure a mass base for their offensive against revolution.

### *Fiasco of Imperialist Policy*

The essence of recent international developments, however, is the growing frustration of imperialist designs, the growing isolation of Anglo-American imperialism and its henchmen in country after country, both in Europe and Asia.

The conference of the nine European communist parties in Poland in September 1947 and its decision to establish an information bureau, for exchange of information and coordination of activities based on mutual agreement, marked a historic turningpoint in the development of the struggle between the democratic camp and the imperialist camp.

The militant call of the conference to unite to resist the expansionist policy of American imperialism and its agents in every country and its drive to war has led to a new upsurge of the democratic masses throughout the world who have increasingly gone over to the offensive against the Anglo-American imperialists and their local allies.

The firm refusal of the central and east-European people's democracies to support the Marshall plan has dealt a heavy blow to American economic expansion. Subsequent developments in Hungary and Czechoslovakia, as well as in Romania and Bulgaria, signify the utter isolation of reaction in these countries. The fact that the toiling masses ranged behind the socialist and peasant parties in these countries have firmly expelled traitorous elements and adhered to the democratic blocs, and thus defeated the American conspiracy to foment civil war in these countries, underlines the tremendous isolation of the

forces of imperialism and reaction, and the enormous strength of the democratic and popular forces.

In Greece, the heroic democratic army, commanded by General Markos, has liberated seven-tenths of Greek territory, while all American imperialism's attempts to crush it have been fought back determinedly; at the same time, America's agents, the Greek fascists, are thoroughly isolated from the toiling people and face a growing opposition even in the territory they yet control, as reflected in numerous strikes and demonstrations.

The heroic struggle of the French working class in defence of the workingclass interests and the sovereignty of French people has given another big blow to American plan of imperialist expansion.

So also in Italy, the growing strength of the people's democratic front, based on communist-socialist unity, evidenced in the successful mass struggles waged by different sections of the workers and agricultural labourers, reflect the increasing people's opposition to the American conspiracy to turn Italy with the aid of de Gasperi and local reaction into its Mediterranean colony.

A similar process is revealed in the growing disintegration of the mass following of the Kuomintang in China, the mounting workers', students' and people's upsurge against US-Kuomintang dictatorship, contrasted with the ever-larger rally of the exploited masses around the banner of the Chinese Communist Party, inflicting on the Kuomintang militarists one defeat after another.

Despite the serious diversion created by the Arab-Jewish conflict in Palestine, the revolutionary anti-British demonstrations by the students and workers of Cairo, the successful students' and people's revolt in Iraq which led to the downfall of the puppet government and the rescinding of the Anglo-Iraqi treaty of slavery, the persistence of revolutionary discontent in Iran, necessitating martial law in Azerbaijan—all go to underline the immense revolutionary possibilities of the situation in the middle east.

Therefore the chief danger before the working class today is to underestimate its own strength, the strength of the anti-imperialist camp of democracy and socialism, and to overestimate the strength of the enemy camp, the camp of imperialism and reaction and its puppets and collaborators in each country.

The developments show that the people's revolutionary forces of the world are stronger than imperialist reaction and that reaction thrives only to the extent it can disrupt and blackmail the democratic camp with the help of the rightwing social-democratic leaders.

Frustrated in its attempts to solve the crisis of capitalism by means of peaceful expansion of its 'sphere' of influence, alarmed by the growing threat of workers' counteroffensive all over the world and menaced by the imminence of a new crisis of overproduction which is inevitable. American imperialism is making hectic preparations for a new world war. All these preparations will only intensify the capitalist crisis and meet with increasing resistance from the toiling people all over the world, rousing them to fight all the more against war and imperialist domination.

## II. CHANGES IN INDIA DURING SECOND WORLD WAR AND ECONOMIC BASIS OF COLLABORATIONIST POLICY OF BOURGEOISIE

In India, the British imperialists saw the menacing tide of revolution, irrepressible and advancing. and realised that the days of the old order were over. The old colonial rule in which British imperialism was the avowed master and was supported by a feudal retinue, bureaucrats, landlords, etc. was an order based on perpetuation of feudalism and opposition to the bourgeoisie.

It was an order which could be maintained only by the most naked use of force—for neither imperialism nor the

princes had any social base, while the order oppressed the entire people alike.

It was an order which was maintained by repressing the people and keeping the bourgeoisie away from state-power as well as by obstructing its economic development.

Imperialism could rule in this way only so long as the movement for national emancipation had not risen to huge dimensions.

The imperialist policy of obstructing capitalist development threw the bourgeoisie into opposition, into the people's camp, and made it oscillate between revolution and imperialism. The bourgeoisie, though drawn by self-interest to join the anti-imperialist movement, always acted as a brake on the militancy of the movement and repeatedly compromised at the expense of the people.

The postwar situation saw the national-revolutionary discontent reaching the level of armed struggle in India. The national bourgeoisie, though it lost the gamble of a 'swift and short struggle' in 1942—which relied for its success on fascist advance—had nevertheless increased its strength and influence over the people enormously, because the people looked upon the 1942 struggle as an anti-imperialist struggle and the national bourgeois leadership as its leader. The exploitation of the anti-imperialist discontent in 1942 now paid its dividend. The national bourgeois leadership could now head and unite the discontent if it so wished. Imperialism realised that that would sound the death-knell of its rule.

The way to bar the revolution, to save the old order, was to purchase the very leaders who were at the head of the national movement and thus broaden the social base of the government, split the revolutionary forces and strike at them.

Menaced by the revolutionary wave, and finding the bourgeoisie also frightened by it and therefore agreeable to compromise, imperialism struck a deal with the bourgeoisie and proclaimed it as independence and freedom. Imperialism was basing itself on a new class—the national



bourgeoisie, whose leaders had placed themselves at the head of the national movement and who were immensely useful in beating down the revolutionary wave.

The objective was the same as in Europe. It was to forge new economic chains to enslave the country and while formally transferring power to the bourgeoisie, keep it as a permanent junior partner in operating the state. The object was to install a reactionary government of vested interests in power which, while protecting the imperialist order, would screen imperialist designs.

This imperialist way out of the crisis is the way of continued subjection, of national enslavement, of retaining the colonial order, its poverty and ruin, of hampering industrial development and keeping the feudal framework intact.

It is once more an attempt to throw all the burdens of the crisis on to the backs of the people and intensify their poverty and exploitation many times. It is the way of suppressing the democracy of the toilers, the rights and liberties of the people and preparing the way for colonial fascisation. In short, imperialism is pursuing the same objects as it pursues through the Marshall plan in Europe.

### *Basis of Revolutionary Wave*

The basis for the postwar revolutionary wave and the collaboration between British imperialism and the national bourgeoisie was laid during the course of the war itself when the process of colonial exploitation reached its extreme limit. The colonial exploitation during the war made the Indian people extremely desperate and ready to do anything to liquidate the present order.

India's economy based on the maintenance of feudal relations on land, landlordism and feudal domains, combined with debt slavery as in ryotwari areas, an economy of scattered petty production, was already a deficit economy with the toiler remaining a starved worker all the time. The parasitic growth of landlordism, debt slavery

and feudal domains sucked dry the tiller, and agriculture decayed rapidly.

The total acreage under major foodgrains declined in the twenty years up to 1942 as follows\*:

In 1921-22, the area under major foodgrains was 158.6 million acres; in 1941-42, it was 156.5 million acres. The total production of major foodgrains also declined. In 1921-22 it was 54.3 million tons; in 1941-42, it was 45.7 million tons.

The yield per acre of rice had declined by 254 lb, or 25 per cent, during the 25 years before the war. It went down from 982 lb per acre during 1909-13 to 728 lb in 1938-39.

The average yield per acre of wheat declined from 724 lb during 1909-13 to 636 lb in 1924-33.

Out of this falling production, the tiller had to yield a major part to the landlord.

Already before the war India had to import food from Burma to make up the deficit. This fact, together with the policy of inflation which the imperialists were pursuing to finance the war at the expense of the people, caused complete chaos and led to the death of hundreds of thousands when during the war imports from Burma stopped.

Feudal relations on land hampered intensive cultivation. They destroyed all initiative of the peasants to grow more food. They made it impossible to utilise the land fully with modern means and equipment, and starved the tiller. These relations became a fetter on the further development of production. They could be kept up by continually starving the tiller—the price was famine, hunger all round—a continuous process of pauperisation, expropriation of peasants and concentration of land in the hands of landlords, rich peasants or moneylenders. The agrarian revolution, completely eliminating all feudal

exploitation and giving the land to the tiller, was the only way out.

The war and the economic results created by it aggravated all these effects ten times, making the peasantry a seething mass of anger and discontent.

The British imperialists, in possession of the country's resources, decided to finance the war by predatory methods at the expense of the people.

With the shifting of the front to India with Japan's attack, the imperialists needed goods worth millions from India, to procure which they resorted to inflation and paid India's common man, the producer, the worker and the peasant, with depreciated money. This meant not only that the nation as a whole was cheated to make a gift of 1600 crores of rupees to Britain (the amount of sterling balances), but that the poorer classes of India were made to part with this 1600 crores of rupees.

The peasant's income, the worker's wages and the salary of the middleclass employee, all were depreciated to below 50 per cent of the former income—making full allowance for the higher prices and dearness allowance given to them.

The poorer sections of the peasantry were looted from both sides. They could not get the full benefit of the rise in prices, they had to purchase industrial goods at still higher prices and also food at extortionate prices when they went to the market to buy it towards the end of the season.

Inflation was an instrument of defrauding the peasantry from all sides, robbing and looting it, passing on the burdens of the war crisis to the starving peasant.

Its result was immense pauperisation of the peasant, still more concentration of land in the hands of the landlords and rich peasants, famine, and three million deaths during the Bengal famine.

With prices of bullocks, iron, plough immensely risen, India's poor peasant finds it impossible to carry on cultivation and becomes a pauperised peasant. Inflation has

further intensified rack-renting, ejection, illegal demands—making the life of the peasant unbearable.

### *Workers and the War Crisis*

Imperialism continued its policy of blocking industrial development in the period of war with the result that once the war jobs are dispensed with, there will be lakhs of unemployed from the army, industries, government services, middleclass clerks and others, without any alternative avenue of employment.

Already nearly a million persons have been thrown out of government services. Railways, docks, civil staff—all are awaiting orders for a general retrenchment.

Indian industry in wartime prospered at the expense of the workers. No new plants were allowed, but the placing of war orders and the extortionate prices secured from the people enabled the capitalists to keep the factories working for all the twenty-four hours.

The workers, however, got their real wages reduced with a rise in the cost of living. In industries where the workers were organised and where strikes took place, the workers secured some dearness allowance, but in other cases the compensation was a mockery.

Inflation reduced the real value of the rupee earned by the worker to six annas or so, and threw the burdens of war on his shoulders.

This, combined with the deterioration in the quality of foodstuffs, has lowered the physical capacity of the workers, leading to absenteeism and a steep fall in their standard of living.

The working class has been fighting against this deterioration for the last seven years.

With the close of the war, the cost of living continued to rise still further and the condition of the working class began to deteriorate still more rapidly, and in the case of a majority of peasants and a considerable proportion of workers and employees it fell too much, below 50 per cent or even less.

Even according to the ~~official estimates, which are~~ generally gross understatements of reality, the cost-of-living index for Bombay had risen from 100 in August 1939 to 224 in 1945 and 285 in September 1947.

In Ahmedabad, the cost-of-living index rose from 100 in August 1939 to 272 in 1945 and 322 in August 1947.

In Sholapur it rose from 100 in August 1939 to 360 in September 1947.

In Kanpur (on the same basis of August 1939—100), it rose to 308 in 1945 and 420 in October 1947.

In Madras, it rose from 100 in August 1939 to 228 in 1945 and 285 in October 1947.

In Trichur (Cochin state) it rose from 100 in August 1939 to 301 in September 1947.

The all-India food index (wholesale) rose from 100 in August 1939 to 239.4 in August 1945 and to 348.5 in February 1948, that of cereals standing at 405 in February 1948. The worker's food now costs him nearly four times as much as before the war.

This attack on workers' wages was bound to unleash workingclass anger. Imperialism tried to forestall it by introducing the eight-hour day (1947), some legislation for holidays with pay for certain sections of workers, appointment of the pay commission for government servants.

But the discontent could not be checked. The working class, whose standard of living had already deteriorated during the war, who had hardly secured any compensation against the rising cost of living, began to fight back.

The all-embracing strike wave is the biggest since 1942. In 1942, the total number of workers affected was 7,72,000 and the man-days lost were 57,79,000. In 1945, the number of workers affected was 7,47,000 and the man-days lost were 40,54,000. In 1946, the number of workers affected rose to the unprecedented figure of 19,61,000 or nearly two million, and the man-days lost were 1,27,17,000 or over 12 million. In the first eight months of 1947, the number of workers on strike was 13,23,253 and the man-days lost were 1,11,95,863.

This huge strike wave clearly shows that the economic crisis is rapidly gathering momentum and the masses have already started a desperate fight against the impoverishment caused by the crisis.

Conditions in the industrial areas are rapidly leading to widespread industrial unrest in textiles, railways, etc., to workers' anger against mass unemployment and lock-outs, for a struggle for nationalisation and a living wage, for industrial planning and removal of industrial anarchy.

The imperialists and the bourgeoisie are intent on solving the crisis at the expense of the workers, by means of rationalisation, reducing the wage-bill, stopping all further social legislation and speeding up in the name of national production.

The working class, however, can be satisfied only with a living wage, nationalisation, limitation of profits, which means that experience is bringing the working class to demand the putting into effect of the whole programme of the democratic revolution. Once more there are only two ways: the capitalist-imperialist way or the people's revolutionary way.

The petty bourgeoisie, the vast mass of it, is drawn into the vortex of the crisis as never before. First, the students fighting and striking for cheaper education, for the lowering of fees, disclose the discontent in middleclass households over present conditions which are weighted in favour of the rich. The vast mass of petty-bourgeois earners, clerks, government servants, secondary and primary school teachers—all have undergone the worst kind of hell during the war years. They were the worst victims of the blackmarket, they were the last to get any addition to their salaries by way of dearness allowance, and now with their patience exhausted, they are resorting to strikes.

The people of the Indian states have also gone through the horrors of food crisis, blackmarketing, extraordinary prices and denial of necessities. The unprecedented awakening caused by the rapid deterioration of economic condi-

tions, the fight against which was often led by the working class, has led the states' people to blaze the new trail of a democratic upsurge in movements like that of "Quit Kashmir". The states' subjects, driven to desperation, have challenged princely rule in Travancore and Hyderabad and made every prince quake with fear.

The galvanisation of this front against autocracy shows the all-pervading character of the democratic upsurge.

No section of the oppressed people can tolerate the present order. Their movement has a spontaneous direction—the change of the existing order.

### *Economic Basis of Collaboration*

But if war conditions made the people desperate, they made the bourgeoisie look to imperialism for a new alliance.

First, the war, though it fleeced the poor—the working class, the toiling peasantry, etc.—immensely enriched the Indian bourgeoisie, placing in its hands an enormous amount of liquid capital.

Industrial profits rose to giddy heights. The economic adviser to the government of India gave the following figures:\*

#### INDEX OF INDUSTRIAL PROFITS

(Base 1928=100)

	<i>General</i>	<i>Textiles</i>
1939	72.4	154.6
1940	99.9	220.1
1941	135.4	489.1
1942	169.4	760.7

The huge government orders, which enabled the factories to run twenty-four hours and ensured a steady market for the goods, the scarcity of commodities for civilian consumption because of government demand which enabled the capitalists to charge inconceivable prices besides

\* *Recent Social and Economic Trends in India*, 1946.

allowing them to make huge blackmarket profits, made the Indian bourgeoisie a willing partner in the common loot and placed an enormous amount of liquid capital in its hands. Never had 'Indian' industry seen such prosperous days; never was the market so attractive; never did profits pour down in millions like this.

Notwithstanding the excess profits tax and other measures, the Indian capitalist class gained enormously in the war. In fact, through inflation and high prices, the government made an unwritten pact with the Indian bourgeoisie to make sure of a steady supply of goods in return for huge profits through looting the people.

The Indian bourgeoisie was not willing to subscribe to government loans. Its leadership—the leadership of the National Congress—was bringing pressure on the government through the 'August struggle'. It, therefore, could not be drawn into an easy economic cooperation in supplying the economic needs of the government. In fact in the 1942 struggle two of the biggest industries—Jamshedpur and Ahmedabad—organised lockouts to bring pressure on the government.

Only a huge bribe could quieten them for the time being—the mechanism of prices, of inflation, of continually rising profits. Even though the industrialists were supposed to deliver part of their production at controlled prices to the government, they could charge anything from the civilian population in the blackmarket and thus reap huge profits. That is why the government did not attack the capitalists for their blackmarket transactions; that is why it appointed them on the textile and other boards and allowed them to sabotage such schemes as that of standard cloth.

The rise of prices in the open market as well as in the blackmarket is the measure of the loot which the capitalists were able to garner in the war period through the imperialist mechanism of robbing the people through inflation and depreciation of their labour.

The growing accumulation of liquid capital in the hands



of industrialists, merchants and traders has solved one of the big problems of the national bourgeoisie—the availability of liquid capital in a poor country. Capital is no longer shy.

This accumulation has made the Indian bourgeoisie—big business—ambitious and to look in all directions for investment. The Tata-Birla plan, propounded by India's moneybags, was an advertisement to the world that Indian capitalists were prepared to invest in a big way and to invite big capital for high stakes. It was the measure of the Indian capitalists' ambition born out of a new confidence created by looted and accumulated cash.

At the same time the capitalists are shrewd enough to understand their own dependence on British and American capital.

British imperialism has successfully denuded Indian industry of all replacement machinery; it has prevented the import of any new machinery to start new industries. Through the eastern group commission and the refusal to implement even the Grady report, it kept Indian industry on a breakdown level during the war.

Renewal and replacement alone will require machinery worth crores of rupees, apart from that required to satisfy the grand ambitions of Indian big business. America and Britain possess the monopoly of capital goods.

Notwithstanding the growth of liquid capital and ambitions, Indian big business is hemmed in from all sides by its backwardness, colonial limitations and dependence on Britain—factors which the latter is fully exploiting.

Indian big business was counting on India's sterling balances amounting to Rs 1600 crore for largescale import of capital goods without any difficulty about securing foreign exchange. The bourgeoisie thought that it could successfully negotiate a deal over this vast sum and secure capital goods at the earliest opportunity.

But the British and American imperialists have joined hands to repudiate the major part of these sterling debts

and forced India to agree to it for the sake of paltry concessions or the release of a very small part of it.

The British, of course, never intend to pay back the sterling balances but only hold out the bait of releasing part of them as a weapon to secure new economic bargains.

America also wants that India should not be paid back the major part of these balances so that it does not get capital goods to any appreciable extent and its bourgeoisie is made dependent on American or British mercies.

The terms of the Anglo-American loan agreement of 6 December 1945, entered into between the government of the United States and the United Kingdom, lay down in clause 10:

"The settlements with the sterling area countries will be on the basis of dividing these accumulated balances into three categories; (1) balances to be released at once and convertible into any currency for current transaction; (2) balances to be similarly released by instalments over a period of years, beginning in 1951; and (3) balances to be adjusted as a contribution to the settlement of war and postwar indebtedness and in recognition of the benefits which the countries concerned might be expected to gain from such a settlement."

The subclause (3) is an open proposal to liquidate a substantial part of the balances with the bait that benefits might follow from such a settlement.

Thus the British and American imperialists are using the very debt which Britain owes to India to beat India down, to force India to scale it down in return for some benefits in the shape of capital goods, or in the alternative, to stick to its debt and forgo any benefits. Immediately, i.e. till India has not made a final settlement, they are not releasing any part of the balances for importing capital goods, though a part is released to import food at extortionate prices.

In order that India should be able to pay for the import of capital goods, when they are not paid out of the balances, India must export its own products to other countries

and earn sufficient dollar or sterling. In the absence of a foreign loan, or utilisation of the sterling balances, India has no other way of importing capital goods except what it earns through its exports.

The sum earned by India through exports is too little to finance the requirements of big business and it is thus brought to face the bitter truth that for its very existence it is dependent on America or Britain. It will have to wait for years if it were to depend on mere exports for financing its need of capital goods. In fact, it will not be able to replace old machinery for years this way.

The refusal to pay back the balances, the insistence on financing imports of capital goods through foreign exchange earned in exports, are devices of imperialism to strengthen the economic dependence of India on the British and American imperialists and force the Indian bourgeoisie down to servile economic agreements.

They are also instruments of drawing the Indian bourgeoisie into the Anglo-American economic net, baiting it by the offer of larger export markets in Anglo-American colonies.

The repeated entreaties for releasing at least a part of the sterling balances show the dependence of the Indian bourgeoisie on imperialist mercies.

The Indian bourgeoisie itself is already in need of foreign markets in view of the falling Indian market due to the economic crisis. It knows that unless some outlet is given Indian industry might collapse in a big way.

But this dependence on foreign markets is nothing but dependence on the colonies and semicolonies of Britain or America, which enables the latter to force down any conditions before access to these markets is given. The foreign exchange earned through this trade will constitute a mere trifle in relation to India's capital requirements and will constantly goad Indian big business to shed all the formal trappings of independence and come as a beggar for alms and completely depend on imperialism.

Indian big business itself, in its ambition, is looking to

widespread foreign markets—to the entire southeast Asia—and looking upon itself as the inheritor of the mantle thrown off by Japan. The Indian bourgeoisie realises that its plan of expansion cannot be realised without foreign markets, and members of the union government are already talking about exports to southeast Asian countries. The desire to exploit the peoples of southeast Asia, with the help of imperialists is one of the most powerful factors in bourgeois politics. The need for foreign markets is the logical conclusion of a desire to develop industries on a capitalist basis with the colonial order kept intact.

Both for its immediate needs—replacement, immediate exports to avoid collapse of industry—and its big plans of expansion of industry, import of capital goods, finding of new markets, release of sterling balances, the national bourgeoisie needs collaboration with imperialism, as without imperialism it will not even be able to run its industry regularly, nor expand it.

The businessmen know that these are the crucial years when either industry expands, new markets are captured before the other nations suffering from war devastation come out as competitors, or they go bankrupt. That is why they need collaboration very badly.

This desire for collaboration, therefore, takes the shape of retaining the colonial order and willingly inviting foreign capital for joint concerns. They agree to make wide and sweeping concessions to foreign capital in return for securing access to other colonial markets.

The secret of the joint concerns, planned by Indian big businessmen but not yet executed, is this. The Indian capitalists finding no other way of getting capital goods are prepared to accept the most extortionate terms from the monopolists of these goods.

The full meaning of this collaboration is seen in the terms demanded by imperialism and accepted by the Indian bourgeoisie.

Foreign capital through the Havana trade pact is demanding full equality, full compensation in case the state

takes over any concern; that no measures of nationalisation be carried through, a demand which the Indian government, itself opposed to nationalisation, has found easy to satisfy through its recent statement of policy when it says that there will be no nationalisation for five years; it demands that no discrimination be made between home and foreign capital; that tariff walls be not raised against foreign capital without previous consultation; and that full security be offered to it, meaning security against labour and state intervention.

These terms, accepted by the Indian bourgeoisie, were openly put in the several speeches of the arrogant American ambassador to India, Dr Grady. Speaking in April 1947 in New York, Dr Grady demanded a fundamental reorganisation of India's taxation structure to suit the needs of the American imperialists for unhampered exploitation of India.

"He was of the opinion that the obstacles to maximum economic cooperation such as the present complicated tax structure that hampered the conduct of manufacturing operations in India by foreign companies could be removed by treaties or agreements"—in short, the state should not encroach through taxation on the profits of the foreign concerns.

Demanding a war on protective tariffs, etc., in the name of world recovery and American assistance and sympathy, Dr Grady stated (Calcutta, 28 October 1947):

"Until there is truly one-world trading system with bilateralism, preferences and all other forms of exclusive trade advantage eliminated or at least in the process of progressive reduction, world prosperity will be shackled..."

Speaking in November 1947 in Calcutta, Dr Grady said "that he was not in a position to state what attitude the Export and Import Bank would take for advancing loans to India if the government of India decided to go ahead with wholesale plans of nationalisation. But if a middle course between private enterprise and state institutions was followed then he believed there would not be much

difficulty..."—thus openly coming out against any genuine nationalisation.

To these insolent demands the reply of the Indian union government has been one of meek acceptance with only verbal modification here and there.

Speaking to the Associated Chambers of Commerce in Calcutta in December 1947, Pandit Nehru said:

"We cannot have any special privilege for any foreign interest in India. There is a large field especially for the next few years and we want cooperation with other countries during the process of India's development, and I think British and other foreign interests that exist in India will and should have this large field open to them."

This open welcome to foreign interests, seeking to dominate India, though verbally qualified by a declaration of no special privileges, shows how the government is begging for foreign help.

In practice it accepts one by one all the terms which the foreign capitalists want.

At the industries conference, which met in January 1948 in New Delhi, the government gave a secret understanding to the Indian capitalists that there would be no nationalisation for at least five years to come, thus accepting the demand of Dr Grady. The resolution which the conference passed on foreign capital kept quiet on all the insolent demands made, and contented itself by saying that the conditions under which foreign capital is invested in India should be regulated by national interests, and private deals between Indian and foreign capitalists should have the formal approval of the government.

What results from this is not industrial revolution, not the freeing of agrarian economy from feudal bondage, but the establishment of a few industrial concerns as give some outlet to the accumulated capital without endangering the interests of Anglo-American imperialism; the establishment of such concerns as fits in with the Anglo-American scheme of exploiting the world and drawing India into its war plans.

If this is welcomed by the bourgeoisie it only reveals the narrow and antinational character of its intentions. But for the mass of the people it only means continuation of feudal exploitation, low wages, no industrial revolution, but continued poverty, unemployment, crisis and famine—the price of tying India to the capitalist order, of collaboration and joint exploitation. That is where the Indian bourgeoisie, and the national leadership which represents it, are taking India—to economic dependence on Anglo-America, subservience to them and growing poverty for the people.

The collaboration thus represents an economic and political alliance against the democratic revolution through which alone the people can liberate themselves from the yoke of the colonial order, of landlordism, of the princes and of foreign and home capitalists. It is directed against the agrarian revolution, against the nationalisation of industries, a living wage and planning, and against the widespread industrial expansion which can only be realised on the basis of nationalisation. It is calculated to guard the present order with the bourgeoisie playing the role of a junior partner to imperialism.

### *Imperialism Needs Collaboration*

The need for collaboration arises from the other side also. Otherwise it might be asked: if the bourgeoisie is so dependent, why do the imperialists not continue in the old way, why is even junior partnership given?

First, the war has meant a certain change in the economic relationship between India and Britain. The repatriation of the sterling debt has meant that Britain's capacity to drain goods without payment, and thereby automatically have a lien over India's exports of raw materials, has declined, which also affects its capacity to export goods to India. Britain, therefore, stands badly in need of new investments in India which will restore the old balance of payments and automatically influence the direction of Indian trade towards it. It is, therefore, in its imperialist interests that it should get access to new investments, tak-

ing care that they do not conflict with the basic interests at home.

Secondly, Britain is afraid that if it were not to placate the Indian bourgeoisie, America might enter into a deal with it. The Indian bourgeoisie, helped by America, might become a second rival, and, therefore, concessions must be made and collaboration has to be achieved.

Thirdly, as an opponent, Indian capital has become a powerful adversary. It is not the old weakling that it was. It has the powerful backing of the national movement which it can exploit against any plan for pure British concerns and a total refusal to make concessions. It has made it impossible to open purely British concerns and concentrate state patronage on them, and thus is in a position to obstruct British investments or plans of exploitation.

And politically, the situation is such that pure British concerns like a pure imperialist state cannot run unless the bourgeoisie is won over. 'Law and order' cannot be maintained, strikes cannot be suppressed and British lives cannot be protected without the aid of the national leadership which represents the bourgeoisie and controls the people.

Therefore both political and economic bargains become necessary to protect the old order.

The so-called 'transfer of power' was one of the biggest pieces of political and economic appeasement of the bourgeoisie—which was necessary to strike a deal. This power, putting the bourgeoisie in control over the manpower and resources of a vast territory, though as a junior partner, was the dream of the bourgeoisie and it has realised it.

From the standpoint of the revolution all that it means is that henceforth the bourgeoisie will guard the colonial order.

Along with this are being negotiated 'treaties as between the equals' for trade, industry, commerce—treaties with the condition mentioned before—treaties which enslave India but enable the bourgeoisie to become a junior partner in the joint exploitation of India.



The concession about exports, about capital goods, etc., however petty they may seem in relation to the needs of the masses, are real in relation to the selfish and petty needs of the colonial bourgeoisie, sufficient for collaboration and betrayal.

This is the economic and political basis of collaboration between imperialism and the national bourgeoisie.

### III. POSTWAR REVOLUTIONARY UPSURGE AND NEW POLICIES OF IMPERIALISM AND INDIAN BOURGEOISIE—NEW CLASS ALIGNMENT

The deep economic crisis and the intensified imperialist exploitation of the war years, which have brought unbearable suffering and starvation to the broad masses of the toiling and common people and sharpened their political consciousness and militancy, continued to operate as a mighty force in the postwar years behind the rising revolutionary fight of the masses.

Despite the secret military plans to crush the struggle which British imperialist statesmen hatched behind the curtain, while they publicly talked of a peaceful transfer of power and of quitting India; despite their backstair intrigues to pitch the Congress and League against each other and provoke a fratricidal war; despite the compromising, disruptive and anti-struggle policies pursued by the Congress and League leaderships—the tempo, the sweep and the militancy of the struggles of the workers and employees in the cities, of the peasants and tenant-serfs in the countryside, of the common people in the feudal autocratic states went on rising steadily in 1945-46.

The sweep of the struggle swept even into the armed forces leading to mutinies and rebellions, strikes and hartals in the imperial armies. Gandhi's nonviolent India, guarded by the bourgeoisie for more than a quarter century against any militant action, now suddenly resorted to arms. The development of the struggles into armed clashes

signified a new stage of the revolutionary struggle—the final phase in defiance of imperialism and the victory of the democratic revolution becomes imminent.

The second characteristic feature of the situation was the great role played by the working class in these struggles—economic and political. The strikes of the working class became the great cohesive and centralising force when the bourgeoisie was abjuring struggle and the National Congress was withdrawing from it. In fact many of the glorious struggles took place in the teeth of opposition from national leaders.

The developing strikes for economic demands and the mass participation of the working class in the political protest strikes were leading the entire struggle in the direction of an all-India general strike, supported by the armed forces and government servants.

India has never seen such a sweep; never seen the armed forces collapsing so easily before popular pressure; never seen the working class fighting with such abandon and courage.

It was the eve of the total collapse of imperialism.

The heroic fighting spirit of the striking workers was shown in the ease with which the workers responded to the call for protest strikes on every national and anti-imperialist issue. It was seen in the rapid spread of strike enthusiasm to other employees, to bank clerks, peons, primary teachers and government servants.

A similar movement started in the armed forces. In 1945 when it was known that tens of thousands of the captured patriotic INA men were being maltreated in several concentration camps, and when the victory-mad imperialists launched a treason trial against the INA leaders, the whole country rose in flaming indignation and demanded their unconditional release.

In November 1945 the students and workers of Calcutta became the spearhead of big protest hartals and strike demonstrations. They marched under the joint flags of the Congress, the League and the Communist Party and

were fired upon by the police and the military. It was then that the first martyrs of the postwar period fell.

In January 1946 the British commander-in-chief had to bow down before the popular storm and release the INA prisoners.

Hard on the heels of the release-the-INA demonstrations and powerfully influenced by them, came the discontent in the ranks of the Royal Indian Navy and the Royal Indian Air Force.

The naval ratings struck work and went on hungerstrike for their demands in the ships and shore-establishments. They demonstrated for their demands in the city, demanded the release of INA men and the withdrawal of the Indian troops from Indonesia. They ran up the Congress, League and red flags on their ships.

The naval officers, bewildered and panic-stricken by the new revolutionary spirit in the navy, sought to suppress them by arrests and bullets. Then it was that these navy men seized their ships and fired back. By their heroic though shortlived resistance the navy men of Bombay and Karachi heralded the beginning of a new period of revolutionary upheaval. Their revolutionary spirit and united action sent a thrill through the ranks of all branches of the Indian armed forces.

Men of the RIAF struck in several places in fraternal solidarity with the RIN. The Indian troops, wherever they were called out against the revolting men, refused to fire.

The Indian working class, led by the Communist Party, instinctively saw in the naval rising a historic turningpoint in our freedom struggle and supported it by total protest strikes and hartals in Bombay, Calcutta, Trichinopoly, Madras and Madura.

The total strike and hartal in Bombay on 22 February 1946, which came as an instantaneous counterchallenge to Admiral Godfrey's insolent threat to destroy the revolting navy and despite the opposition of Vallabhbhai Patel and the Congress leadership, struck panic into the hearts of the imperialists. They called out white troops with tanks and

armoured cars to spread terror and murder in the streets. Over 200 citizens fell victim to their bullets in two days.

The naval rising and the great solidarity action staged by the advanced guard of the Indian working class in its support were not isolated incidents. They were a flaming signal which announced to the world that a volcanic discontent, an anti-imperialist urge, was smouldering in the minds of the Indian people and their armed forces, ready to be united and harnessed for the final annihilation of the rotten structure of the imperialist-feudal rule.

One has only to recapitulate the striking events and mass actions of the first six months of 1946 to be convinced of the truth of this.

Within a week of the RIN strike, more than 300 military sepoy's stationed at Jabalpur struck work and paraded throughout the streets with all the three flags, Congress, League and red (4 March).

On 8 March, the workers and citizens of Delhi observed a protest strike and hartal against the victory celebrations. The Town Hall was attacked and set on fire.

On 18 March, the Gurkha soldiers of Dehra Dun revolted in protest against insulting remarks by officers.

Delhi policemen went on hungerstrike for wage increase and the military was used to arrest them.

Policemen of Allahabad went on hungerstrike in protest against ration cut (19 March).

Ten thousand Bihar policemen went on strike on 3 April.

Side by side with this beginning of insurrectionary atmosphere in the armed forces and the police, a tremendous strike wave was rising among the working class.

This terrific pace of events in the rest of India was producing the first repercussions among the peoples of the feudal autocratic states.

The people of Kashmir launched in May 1946 a movement for the end of autocracy of the Dogra house and for the immediate introduction of a democratic constitution. The ruler promptly arrested Sheikh Abdullah and un-

leashed a reign of terror against the Kashmiri people, who, however, struck back and performed marvels of heroic resistance.

It was clear that a new round of states' people's struggles, this time for the final abolition of princely autocracy, was being heralded by the fighting people of Kashmir, and the people of the rest of India were preparing to support them.

Thus the countrywide movement which grew round the demand for the release of the INA men and the naval rising of February marked the beginning of a new period which was not just of mounting discontent and unrest but one which immediately placed on the agenda the democratic revolution and the task of vanquishing imperialism and its collaborators.

The paralysis of the imperialist system was seen not only in the breakdown of its economic structure, the poverty and hunger it created, but in the disintegration of the armed and the police forces which were no longer able to resist the popular pressure and revolutionary upheaval.

Imperialism saw the writing on the wall and opened negotiations with the two bourgeois parties, the Congress and the League. But it was not only imperialism that was frightened by the menace of the approaching revolution. The bourgeois leaderships of the National Congress and the Muslim League clearly saw that the struggle of the masses was getting beyond control and was bringing to the forefront the working class and the exploited masses. They, therefore, were eager for compromise and began to attack the militant struggles of the people.

The policies pursued by the leaderships of the Congress and the Muslim League corresponded to the bourgeois vested interests which they represent and not to the anti-imperialist and democratic aspirations of the vast masses that they claim to lead.

Both the leaderships resiled in panic from the manifestations of mass upheaval against the imperialist-feudal rule and were ready to welcome the cabinet mission as soon

as it was announced and to seek cooperation with imperialism.

When the cabinet mission came with its plan, the Congress leadership turned even more antistruggle. Its ministries let loose a wave of repression against the working-class and peasant struggles. It set its face against the struggles of the states' peoples in order to appease the princes and betrayed the struggle of the Kashmiri people. Instead of rejecting the plan with its nonsovereign constitution-making body and retention of the princes, as a plan of masked British domination and as one based on the imperialist policy of divide and rule, it accepted it with minor criticisms.

The leadership of the National Congress, representing the interests of the Indian capitalist class, thus betrayed the revolutionary movement at a time when it was on the point of overthrowing the imperialist order. It only exploited the movement to win the maximum concessions possible for its own selfish interests and disrupted for the time being the growing revolutionary movement. By detaching the Congress from the movement, by isolating these spontaneously developing militant struggles, by repressing them, the national leadership played the game of disrupting the battle against imperialism and pursued a policy of repressing it.

The leadership of the Muslim League, representing the interests of the Muslim capitalists and landlords, had always played a disruptive and antinational role through its policy of communalism, its slogan of division of India and its general policy of obstructing the national emancipatory struggle headed by the Congress. The Muslim League leadership capitalised the backwardness of the Muslim masses and the failure of the national reformist leadership to draw the Muslim masses into the common struggle, and succeeded in giving the freedom urge of the Muslim masses a distorted expression. The hypocritical talk of 'Muslim freedom', of saving the Muslims from the Hindus, stood exposed when in connection with the RIN strike in Bombay,

Jinnah came out against the participation of Muslim workers and people in the common demonstration, and betrayed his fear of independent mass action.

Throughout this period the Muslim League did its best to keep the Muslim masses away from the developing revolutionary wave but did not always succeed. It had sometimes to start demonstrations on its own (demonstration in Calcutta for the release of the INA prisoner Rashid Ali) to give an outlet to the anti-imperialist sentiment of the Muslim masses. The Muslim League leadership was concentrating only on blackmailing the Congress and through obstruction to secure its separatist demand of Pakistan.

It also, therefore, readily took to negotiations on the basis of the cabinet mission's plan. The Muslim League leadership thus betrayed the revolutionary movement and revealed itself once more as an agency of upper-class interests out to sell the freedom movement for its own selfish gains.

British imperialism, standing in immediate need of erecting a barrier to the revolutionary movement, saw the necessity of placating the Congress to the utmost limit. It realised that only by using the Congress leadership against the revolutionary movement could the imperialist order be saved.

At the same time, having drawn the Congress into negotiations, imperialism fully exploited the fear of the Congress leaders of revolution, their need for economic help from Britain, their conflict with League, and the independent existence of the princely autocracy, to make them willingly accept the Mountbatten plan.

The original cabinet mission plan did not provide for direct partition; this was a concession made to Congress pressure. But as soon as the purely Congress-manned interim government came into existence the pressure of riots was worked up, taking advantage of the 'direct action' launched by the League. Pressure was also worked later through cabinet members of the Muslim League, when it afterwards joined the government, making it impossible

for the Congress to function the government. The leaders of the Congress were thus forced to accept partition of India.

### *Real Face of the Mountbatten Award*

The Mountbatten award comes as a culmination of the betrayal of the revolutionary struggle by the National Congress and the League leaderships.

Though the bourgeois leaderships parade the story that independence has been won, the fact is that the freedom struggle has been betrayed and the national leadership has struck a treacherous deal behind the back of the starving people, betraying every slogan of the democratic revolution.

The Mountbatten plan partitioned India. The national bourgeois leaderships of the Congress and the Muslim League, which had always opposed the solution of the communal problem on the basis of the just and revolutionary principle of selfdetermination of nationalities, accepted the imperialist solution of partition on the basis of religion. This enabled imperialism to organise the ghastliest riots and mass butcheries of minorities, creating permanent hostility between Hindus and Muslims, and to work up war fever between the two states when required in imperialist interests. The partition is a ready-made weapon to organise riots and sidetrack the revolutionary movement by war appeals. It is one of the biggest attacks on the unity and integrity of the democratic movement and is also used to weaken the bourgeoisie of both the states vis-a-vis imperialism.

Secondly, the plan keeps the princes, the age-old friends of the imperial order, intact and enhances their bargaining power, enabling the national leaders to parade their accession as a great triumph, for the princes are now supposed to be independent.

Thirdly, the leading economic strings are still in the hands of the imperialists, who successfully use them to



make the bourgeoisie move against the masses, crush the democratic revolution and establish a new line-up of imperialism, princes, landlords, and the bourgeoisie.

The Mountbatten plan is the expression of this alliance against the democratic revolution—an alliance which seeks to drown the revolution in blood. It crowns the process of bourgeois vacillation with final capitulation. It is the fruit of the national leadership's compromising policy, culminating in an avowedly antinational, antipeople and antirevolutionary policy.

What the Mountbatten plan has given to the people is not real but fake independence. Through this award British imperialism partitioned India on communal lines and gave to the bourgeoisie an important share of state-power, subservient to itself.

Britain's domination has not ended, but the form of domination has changed. The bourgeoisie was so long kept out of state-power and in opposition to it; now it is granted a share of state-power in order to disrupt and drown the national-democratic revolution in blood.

The supreme organs of the state, the army, the navy, the air force and the bureaucracy, are controlled by the servitors of imperialism. They are dominated by upper-class elements, officered by them, by old bureaucrats who have pronounced pro-British sympathies and bitterly hate all democratic advance. And the final imperialist control will be registered through military missions and military advisers—'willingly accepted' by the Indian government.

The behaviour of the military, the police and the civil service in face of the riot offensive of communal elements clearly demonstrates how antipopular, antidemocratic and proimperialist elements control these organs of the state—elements on which the bourgeoisie safely relies for the law and order of collaboration.

At the same time the representatives of the bourgeoisie, the traditional leaders of the national movement, are handed over the reins of government, while being dominated by

imperialism through trade pacts and an open military alliance which is in the process of formation.

The Mountbatten award does not really signify a retreat of imperialism but its cunning counteroffensive against the rising forces of the Indian people. This is demonstrated by the communal carnage and the setback to the democratic and anti-imperialist struggles after 15 August.

British imperialism was forced to change the forms of its domination as a result of the growing popular upsurge for freedom and democracy during the war and postwar days. Faced with the alternative of quitting India, it has given a share of power to the capitalists and landlords in order to be able to remain. To parade this new status as national freedom or as national advance is to shield imperialist designs and the subservience of the national bourgeoisie.

### ***National Government and the People***

The deeds and actions of the 'national government' since 15 August fully prove this understanding of the purpose behind the Mountbatten plan.

The establishment of the central government headed by Pandit Nehru has not solved a single problem of the democratic revolution. Its establishment does not mean that the Indian people have won either freedom or independence, nor does it ensure that they will be moving in the direction of democracy and freedom for the people.

On the contrary, the government has already made a big move in the opposite direction—against the interests and freedom of the people. It is linking itself with the Anglo-American bloc of imperialist powers—a bloc which seeks to crush all democratic revolutions and to create satellite states. It is manoeuvring to find an advantageous position for itself in the Anglo-American bloc.

The recent acts of the national government prove beyond doubt that its policy is to suppress freedom and democracy.

The constituent assembly, manned by the same leaders

as lead the national government, is preparing an authoritarian constitution. The working class and the Indian people will not get anything except the right to vote at long intervals and that too only for the provincial assemblies. The constitution framed by the constituent assembly will be a constitution for the upper classes to rule the oppressed millions in the interests of joint exploitation by the Indian and British capitalists.

The constitution provides for arrest without warrant and detention without trial, it authorises the provincial governors to act in their discretion, legislate by ordinance and rule by proclamation, thus usurping the powers of the legislature and overruling them in the name of grave emergency.

It includes the reactionary provision for second chambers in provinces and allows for nomination of members to the council by the governor, thus ensuring that the vested interests and their upper-class spokesmen will have a dominant voice in the chamber.

The model constitution for provinces further does not accept the basic right of linguistic national units to self-determination, thus expressing clearly the reactionary bourgeois interests which seek to dominate the different nationalities.

It does not provide for proportional representation, without which the progressive political parties and the various minority groups cannot get fair representation. It does not provide for freedom and selfdetermination of the tribal and other backward peoples enabling the formation of autonomous regions or provinces, without which these backward people cannot economically and culturally protect and develop themselves.

Under the constitution the basic and fundamental rights of the toilers, such as right to work, right to a living wage, equal pay for equal work, right to old-age, sickness and unemployment aid, are denied and do not find a place in the fundamental rights which the new state of India is bound by the constitution to guarantee and protect.

While these rights of the mass of toilers are not guaranteed, the property and the privileges of the vested interests are specifically granted protection by a clause in the fundamental rights that no property of a person or corporation shall be taken over for public use except by payment of compensation, thus preventing through a constitutional guarantee all plans of nationalisation of industries including foreign concerns.

The government is carrying out the plan of Indian big business to oppose nationalisation, suppress the workers and demand more production through longer hours of work; intensification of labour and rationalisation; freezing of wages in the name of stopping the wage-price spiral; sabotaging the implementation of gains secured by the workers (railway agreement); holding forth no hope of legislation for a living wage, social security or curtailment of management's power of dismissal; assuring the capitalists of full freedom to loot the people in the name of building a 'mixed economy', while slandering the workers for the fall in production, demanding an increase in the hours of work. In short, it is passing the burden of the crisis on to the shoulders of workers to keep up capitalist profits.

The control of the government by the national leadership has placed an additional and powerful weapon in its hands to sabotage the revolutionary struggles against princely autocracy. It has persistently raised illusions that princely autocracy can be fought through governmental pressure and has utilised them to enter into accession agreements with the princes which keep autocracy intact. By parading accession as a big triumph, attention is side-tracked from the democratic struggles inside the states. The latest act of betrayal is the standstill agreement with the nizam.

In a number of bigger states the bourgeois leadership has used the popular movements against princedom to get limited constitutional reforms which do not give power to the people but give a minor share of power to the bourgeoisie. In exchange they have joined hands with the

princes to defend feudal exploitation and oppression of the people and to disrupt and suppress all popular democratic movements.

The policy that the government follows can only be described as one of supporting feudal reaction and sabotaging the revolutionary, antifeudal, anti-imperialist struggle.

In the matter of civil liberties and democratic rights, the provincial governments, under the guidance of the central government, have passed the blackest acts—public safety acts—which are freely used against the rising workers' and peasants' movements and against the students; hundreds are detained without trial, externed or interned.

The leadership of the central government has applied the brake to the agrarian legislation of the provincial ministries, which itself was an attempt to cheat the peasant in the name of the abolition of landlordism. Saddled with compensation and with no provision for land to the tiller, the legislation is not even a mild reform, retains landlordism under different forms, and is an attempt to split the peasant movement and disrupt the growing forces of the agrarian revolution. It is an attempt to broaden the basis of the present bourgeois government.

In the matter of minorities, the government follows a communal policy, which is essentially the bourgeois way of inciting majority-minority conflict. This leads it to practise discrimination and favouritism against the minorities depriving them of their fundamental democratic rights, and to retreat before the more ruthless and direct incitement of communal conflict by feudal-imperialist reaction, which has resulted in the mass murder of minorities in certain areas.

The admission of Hindu Sabha leader, Shyamaprosad Mukherjee, into the cabinet and the retention of Akali leader, Baldev Singh, in the important position of defence minister, taken together with the open encouragement given to communal reaction, shows how the government it-

self wanted to use the weapon of communal division, even before the mass massacres had started in the Punjab.

Thus for the government, the oppression of the minorities is a conscious and deliberate policy.

This policy, carried to its greatest lengths by Sardar Patel with his praise of the openly communal princes (Patiala, Bharatpur, Nawanagar) and of the RSS, and his viciously communal incitement of Hindus against the Muslims and Pakistan, has lent added strength to these forces. The result is seen in the assassination of Mahatma Gandhi by a leading organiser of the RSS.

So determined are the leaders of the government to utilise and safeguard their use of this communal weapon that even after the assassination of Mahatma Gandhi, every effort is made to screen and protect reaction; angry people demonstrating against them are arrested and even shot down, a farce is enacted of arresting some of them—while in reality every occasion is utilised to find an excuse to say a good word for the communalists and save them from the anger of the masses.

The arrest of Hindu Mahasabha leaders, etc. took place because the angry masses set the pace and compelled the government to take steps against these communalists.

Even the banning of the RSS by the national government has been done due to the tremendous mass indignation against it and is only a cover for its continued policy of shielding and allying with that organisation and the elements behind it.

According to Pandit Nehru's own statement this policy does not lead to any differences inside the cabinet; even on this issue there are no political differences, but only temperamental differences. This should be enough to demonstrate the strong pull of communal reaction on the national government.

### *Government's Economic Policy*

While refusing to develop the industries of our country by nationalising key and vital industries, the government

at the same time is encouraging the export drive in the interests of Indian big business and at the expense of the people. This is a part of the plan of collaboration with Anglo-American bloc, since these export markets can only be secured in collaboration with the imperialists. By securing foreign exchange through these exports, Indian big business wants to purchase machinery for new industries with the help of the Anglo-American imperialists. Thus again it has to depend on the Anglo-American capitalists for its industries.

This double economic dependence on the Anglo-American capitalists, both for the market for Indian products and for purchasing new machinery, necessitates a servility and abject surrender to them; and big business, helped by the government, is preparing to sell out India's future to the Anglo-American imperialists.

The latter are demanding a number of concessions and fundamental rights—no discrimination against foreign capital, no nationalisation, no tariffs which are not agreed to, joint concerns for the exploitation of Indian people, full security to them—all of which are embodied in the draft trade charter being discussed at Havana and disclose that Indian big business and the government are mortgaging Indian economy to Anglo-American capital in their selfish interests. The natural result of this is not only economic but indirect political domination, so that both the economy and the political freedom of India are being mortgaged to the Anglo-American monopolists.

### *Government's Foreign Policy*

The foreign policy of the government follows the class interests it represents. From the very beginning Pandit Nehru adopted a line of forming a so-called third bloc—a line which represents the interests of big business inasmuch as it kept India away from the democratic camp and opened the way to the imperialist camp.

Recent events have torn off the mask of neutrality from

the government's foreign policy. On all crucial issues the Indian delegation has taken an antidemocratic and pro-imperialist stand—Korea, 'Little Assembly', Ukraine. On the question of Ukraine it allowed itself to be exploited by the USA, and took the hypocritical stand that India stood against Ukraine because southeast Asia was not represented.

On the questions crucial for the peoples of Asia in particular, e.g. the American-directed Kuomintang war against the Chinese people and the French colonial war in Vietnam, it has remained silent and refused to act: while on the question of the Japanese peace treaty, it has virtually lined up with Anglo-American imperialism. Over the American-backed Dutch war against the Indonesian people, it has approved of the betrayal of the Indonesian freedom struggle, achieved through the latest truce, put through by the US-sponsored and dominated good offices committee and welcomed by president Truman.

Foreign policy depends on economic policy and India is also rapidly lining herself up with the Anglo-American bloc in matters of foreign policy. Its diplomats are already uttering anti-Soviet slanders, e.g. Sir Maharaj Singh's statement on war propaganda.

The British imperialists are giving open hints about an anti-Soviet bloc including the overseas territories of Britain, indicating that the role that India will have to play is to support the western bloc economically, especially with its raw materials.

Speaking in the House of Commons on 22 January, Bevin, Britain's foreign minister, stated in connection with the formation of a bloc of west-European powers:

"The overseas territories of these countries (Britain, France, Holland, etc.) should be brought within this union, so that this tremendous cooperation would stretch through Europe, the middle east and Africa to the far east... The western organisation of Europe must be economically supported. That involves the closest possible collaboration with the commonwealth and overseas territories, not only



the British, but the French, Dutch, Belgian and Portuguese overseas territories. These territories are large primary producers and are capable of great development."

Along with this come reports about an alliance of south-east Asian countries—embracing India, Pakistan, Burma and Ceylon and in agreement with Britain—an alliance of an entirely 'defensive' nature; the aim of this 'bloc' as openly reported is to 'prevent the spread of communism in southeast Asia', which really means suppressing all struggles for freedom and democracy in southeast Asia and bringing these countries directly into the imperialist camp. The Indian bourgeoisie, which is playing the role of chief agent of the imperialists for the formation of this bloc, wants all southeast-Asian countries to fall in line with them, i.e. give up the struggle for freedom and join the imperialist camp, because it wants to prevent the Indian people from being affected by the revolutionary struggle in these countries and also because it wants to get some foothold in these markets, with the help of imperialism, by keeping the colonial order intact.

There are also reports about military missions from Britain coming to India to keep its defence properly organised; reports which openly state that British statesmen do not want India or Pakistan to have any defence policy out of the orbit of the British commonwealth, i.e. independent of British imperialism.

That is where the government and big business are dragging India—from the freedom struggle to the Anglo-American camp.

### *New Role of the Bourgeoisie*

How is it that a government headed by the national leaders and one which came to power on the crest of a wave of popular struggles should pursue these policies?

That is so because the national leaders, who headed the popular struggles all these years and who are now in the government, represent the class interests of the national bourgeoisie, the industrial bourgeoisie.

The leaders of the government including Pandit Nehru and Sardar Patel represent the interests of the Indian capitalist class, and the formation of the government after 15 August—after what is known as the transfer of power, but which in reality is the sharing of power—has meant an immense change in the position of the national bourgeoisie vis-a-vis the people and their struggles.

Formerly the national bourgeoisie and its leaders had to rely on the masses, mass struggles, etc. to secure concessions, share in power, etc. to advance their own interests. The bourgeoisie was excluded from political power, it had no real opportunity to develop industries and had no political power over the people.

The postwar revolutionary upsurge forced imperialism to change its strategy, in order to be able to strike at the democratic forces all the more ferociously.

Imperialism makes big concessions to the bourgeoisie and hands it over governmental power to rule the Indian people in its own narrow selfish interests.

At the same time the state it has won is dependent on imperialism and is a satellite state.

In the new state, therefore, the national bourgeoisie shares power with imperialism, with the latter still dominant indirectly.

This is the secret behind the reactionary policy of the national government. The bourgeoisie has ceased to play an oppositional role; it has renounced mass struggles to get concessions from imperialism; it is now depending on the new state and its control over the Indian people to use them as pawns in its bargaining with imperialism, whenever differences and conflicts arise. These conflicts will be solved at governmental level by offering new concessions to imperialism through customs, lowering of tariffs, securing of joint concerns, etc.

The bourgeoisie, therefore, has turned its face away from the masses, and gone over to collaboration. That is why its government consistently adopts an antimass, antidemocratic policy.

In the past the bourgeoisie, and the national leadership which represents it, were in opposition to imperialism; now they have given up that opposition. This is the new change brought about by the transfer of power on 15 August.

Henceforward the march of the democratic revolution will have to proceed directly in opposition to the bourgeois government and its policies, and the bourgeois leadership of the Congress.

### *Game Behind the Riot Offensive*

The fact that the government is manned by popular leaders and that it arose on the crest of a wave of mass struggles has concealed the class character of the government and the change in the position of its class.

The riot offensive, inspired and engineered by imperialists and their feudal reactionary agents, and their denunciation of the national government has led many people to believe that the feudal reactionaries were attacking a revolutionary government and that it was the business of the people to line up unconditionally behind the government. This is a totally wrong understanding of the situation.

The unleashing of communal riots in the Punjab, UP and the Indian states, the massacre of tens of thousands of innocent Hindus, Sikhs and Muslims, the forcible extermination and expulsion of minorities, the terrible sufferings and hardships inflicted on innocent men, women and children, and the economic chaos arising from all this, were pre-planned and organised by the imperialist-feudal counter-revolutionary forces. The object was to disrupt and drown the people's democratic revolution in blood. The main attack was against the people who were moving forward through strikes, armed conflicts and revolts of states' peoples to a democratic revolution.

The attempt of the forces of counterrevolution was to sidetrack the revolutionary discontent into communal channels, disorganise the people and through it consolidate a lineup of all vested interests against the mass movement, a lineup in which the bourgeoisie will move more to the

right, allying with feudal and communal interests all the more, so that a stronger front against the masses could be created.

This was to be achieved by strengthening the openly communal elements inside the government to appease Hindu communal reaction and surrender to the princes on the question of maintenance of autocracy, by strengthening the consistent communal policy of Sardar Patel and checking the inconsistent and vacillating policy of Pandit Nehru.

There is no doubt that the deeply-laid plot of counter-revolution very nearly succeeded in creating confusion, vacillation and demoralisation in the ranks of the people and of political parties. The main objectives were forgotten and a tendency to line up behind the government in panic was noticed.

The imperialists and their agents would precisely like such a lining-up of the working class and democratic forces behind the government, as it would lead to the giving up of all efforts to carry through the democratic revolution and to the doing away with all opposition and criticism of the government in its policy of combating all national-democratic advance.

For such a policy ensures the success of their strategy. Why are riots on a mass scale possible today? Precisely because the national bourgeois leadership has, through its antinational compromise, disorganised the forces of revolution and allowed the reactionaries to divert the discontent.

Communal riots are the direct result of the imperialist conspiracy and bourgeois compromise. Imperialism has strengthened the basis of communal riots in four ways: (i) partition which made one community hostile to another; (ii) fixation of boundaries in a manner that roused communal bitterness to its height; (iii) independent position for the states which could manoeuvre between India and Pakistan and play one against the other in a most vicious manner; (iv) communal poisoning of most of the army chiefs and bureaucrats, which has resulted in the use of the state machinery for spreading riots.

Imperialism is instigating communal riots in order to create conditions in which the national bourgeois leadership will be increasingly forced to submit to imperialist domination, and the common toiling people will be forced to submit to the leadership of the upper classes. It also aims at smashing people's unity and crushing all democratic movements.

Fascist elements like the RSS, Hindu-Muslim-Sikh communal reactionaries and bureaucratic administrators trained up by imperialism are the chief agents for provoking riots. The princes and landlords are at the head of them. But the bourgeoisie, including sections of the leaderships of the Congress and the League, has also played a leading part in communal riots, though certain sections of the Congress and the League leaderships have taken a stand against them.

Sections of the national bourgeois leadership also provoke riots as a matter of policy—as part of their policy towards the minorities. The policy of compromise with British imperialism, the policy of relying on it in the conflict between the Indian union and Pakistan, leads straight to the massacre of minorities as a weapon of intimidating the government of the other dominion. The massacre of Muslims, for instance, is a part of the game of intimidating Pakistan, of replying to anarchy with anarchy—a game which suits the interests of the British excellently. The minorities have become a big pawn in the game of power politics of the compromisers.

A section of the bourgeois leadership encourages and protects communal armed bands for using them against political opponents and democratic movements and for strengthening the princes and other vested interests; they even incorporate communal armed bands into the police, home guard and army.

Another section of the bourgeois leadership, while continuing the policy of compromise and thus creating conditions for riots, are scared by the riots when they actually occur, due to the disorganisation of administration, trade,

etc. They take only palliative measures to stop the extreme forms of riots and anarchy.

The workers, peasants and progressive intelligentsia are the most determined forces that resist all riots, just because riots smash all democratic movements. In fighting riots, they must make use of all opportunities including the government measures to combat them.

But until the bourgeois policy of collaboration with imperialism and feudalism and its hostility to the principle of selfdetermination are successfully defeated, riots will take place again and again.

Not only communal riots, but other kinds of riots between one nationality and another, between the advanced castes and backward castes, between the tribal people and others, will also take place until full democracy and self-determination of the people are achieved and the imperialist hold over the organs of the state is completely smashed.

A determined fight against the reactionary policy of the Congress and the League leadership is, therefore, essential to end the possibility of all riots. An end to these riots can only be brought about by complete elimination of imperialist domination and full democratic progress.

### *Unmask the Compromisers and Communalists*

The policy of compromise with feudalism and imperialism has already bred riots and will breed more riots. Compromise feeds counterrevolution, and it is so in the case of India also.

The hands of all national leaders are equally tainted with compromise and they are all responsible for the mounting offensive of the communal elements.

Unless their compromising policies are exposed before the people, unless the people see the connection between them and the riot-offensive and push their policies back, the feudal-imperialist offensive cannot be defeated.

It is, therefore, wrong to draw basic distinctions between different national leaders on the question of their approach

to the communal problem. Sardar Patel who takes an openly communal stand, and Pandit Nehru who comes out against riots and for the protection of the Muslim minority, both move in the vicious circle created by compromise. In the final analysis Pandit Nehru has no independent line and has to fall in line with Sardar Patel.

Pandit Nehru's own stand, which regards Hindu communalist reaction only as a reaction to Muslim communalism, and does not see in it the forces of counterrevolution; his indulgence in threats of reprisals against Pakistan on the Kashmir issue; his failure to take a bold stand against the Hindu Mahasabha and the RSS even after Gandhiji's assassination; his full acquiescence in the policy of the central and provincial governments of utilising this assassination in order to strike at the democratic, revolutionary and really anticomunal forces in the country—all these only show that Nehru has completely surrendered to Patel's policy.

The party will utilise every opportunity to fight riots and will make use of every measure taken by the government to stop riots. It will regard riots as an offensive against the revolution but, at the same time, will have no illusion that the national government can or will fight against riots.

In doing this, it is no doubt the duty of the party to utilise every antiriot utterance of men like Nehru and counteract the openly communal policy of other leaders. Such utterances, acts and propaganda have some importance inasmuch as they enable us to expose more easily men like Nehru and counteract the openly communal policy of other leaders. Such utterances, acts and propaganda have some importance inasmuch as they enable us to expose more easily men like Patel who are nearest to feudal reaction.

### *Patel and Nehru*

Not only on the question of riots but also on the question of democratic policies, there exist illusions about Nehru.

Nehru is seen as a fighter against Patel's policies and almost made to appear as the leader of the democratic forces. Every verbal opposition of Nehru to Patel is magnified. It is thus that an illusion is created that if Nehru's hands are strengthened as against Patel, the government will be transformed into an instrument of the people's will.

This estimate of Nehru is anti-Marxist and serves to tie down the masses to the bourgeois leadership. It must be clearly understood that Nehru is as much a representative of the bourgeoisie as Patel is. They both defend the class policies and interests of the bourgeoisie which is now collaborating with imperialism.

Today Nehru is following the same policy as Patel. It is so in the matter of foreign policy, of the states, of decontrol, of industrial policy, etc. He often outdoes Patel on vital issues. He denounces strikes of the working class as a stab in the back.

In fact all shades of difference within the bourgeois camp (such as those between Nehru and Patel) are entirely subordinated to the new basic realignment of the class as a whole, viz its role of collaboration with imperialism. Both Nehru and Patel represent this collaborationist class, and all differences between them are being and will be solved within the fundamental framework of the collaborationist policy of that class as a whole. The working class cannot go forward without fighting the policy of this class. That is why today it is anti-Marxist for the working class to base its strategy on 'differences' within the bourgeois camp such as 'Patel-Nehru' differences.

It is thus clear that the central government, manned by leaders of the National Congress, is the avowed enemy of the national-democratic revolution. Marxism-Leninism has always taught that in the period of declining capitalism—of the general crisis of capitalism—the bourgeoisie cannot lead the democratic movement to victory, that it betrays it and goes over to the opposite camp, and that it is the working class which must lead it.



### *National Leaders and the Masses*

We must remember that those in charge of the government are still looked upon by the majority of the people as their leaders and the government is still looked upon as a national government in contrast to the previous imperialist government.

The masses do not yet realise that the national government is collaborating, that the country is being sold to Anglo-American imperialism, that the policies of the leadership are leading to riots, that the government is being run in the interests of big business; they still believe it to be a free government and are the victims of national sentiments and national illusions about the Congress leadership. The trusting masses of our country, though they are getting rapidly disillusioned with the national government, have not yet lost their faith in Nehru, their faith in the Congress, and though repeatedly betrayed, they yet cling to old illusions.

Any criticism of the national government which does not take into account these sentiments about it is likely to defeat its purpose.

If in criticising the policies of the government, we do not base ourselves on concrete instances, if we do not patiently argue on the basis of a series of such instances and bring the masses to the point at which they can for themselves see the truth about our characterisation of the policies of the national government, if we do not take into consideration the strong ties of loyalty that still bind the people to the Congress, our criticism will not impress the people and will not succeed in its aim of making them break away from their collaborating leaders.

At the same time the rapid economic deterioration and disillusionment of the masses have created conditions for the successful unmasking of these reactionary policies—conditions which did not exist in the past.

To be able to move the masses into action for the fulfilment of the democratic aims, the working class must tear

them away from the bourgeois leadership and build a new movement based on a new understanding of national unity.

#### IV. DEEPENING ECONOMIC CRISIS IN INDIA—THE CAPITALIST AND THE PEOPLE'S WAYS OUT

The causes of the upsurge lie in the crisis of colonial economy, accentuated by wartime exploitation and post-war developments.

The main features of the crisis in India are:

(1) growing collapse of agrarian production because of feudal relations, and ruin of smallscale production;

(2) the decline of industrial production from the middle of the war itself, in spite of favourable factors, showing the utter rottenness of the colonial order;

(3) accentuation of all the factors of colonial crisis by wartime inflation, which was the device of imperialism to transfer its war burdens to the people of India; and,

(4) following this, a still further polarisation of wealth and poverty in India, the masses of workers and peasants being forced to lower standards of life, or utter destitution.

The postwar upsurge continues because the exploiting classes, the bourgeoisie, the imperialists, the landlords and the feudal princes, once more attempt to pass the burdens of the crisis on to the backs of the masses; because they seek to protect their profits in the face of decline in production; to protect their rights and interests in the face of deterioration of agriculture, at the expense of the workers and peasants, at the expense of middle classes. This leads to a sharpening of the economic struggle of the masses and develops it to a still higher stage—political struggle.

#### *Collapse of Agrarian Economy*

The colonial economy based upon feudal and semifeudal landlordism had already started cracking long before the war. Agrarian revolution came on the agenda with the

commencement of the world capitalist crisis in the year 1929, it became accentuated when the second world war had broken out in 1939. By this time the outmoded land-relations had already become such a fetter on agricultural production that even the royal commission on land revenue was forced to recommend abolition of permanent zamindari settlement with, of course, adequate compensation to the landlords.

But one decade of peasant struggles (1930-40), bursting out at intervals in different parts of India, revealed that complete abolition of all forms of landlordism without any compensation and a redistribution of land to the tillers had become an urgent social need.

On top of this came the war economy which threw rural economy completely out of gear during the period of the second world war. The devastating Bengal famine of 1943, the famines in Bihar, Orissa, Malabar and Andhra came as a rude reminder that the land system was collapsing very fast.

Imperialist war economy, viz inflation and high prices and acute scarcity of all essential goods, resulted in impoverishment of the toiling peasants to an unprecedented extent. The cost of agricultural production increased abnormally while the family budget of the poor and middle peasants became upset. Inflation, which increased the economic burden on the mass of the peasantry and was an imperialist device to pass the burdens of war on to the Indian masses, meant a rapid process of expropriation of the peasantry.

The landlords have taken full opportunity of the rack-rented peasants' misery and grabbed land to an ever-increasing extent. Small peasants' land passed into the hands of landlords whose monopoly hold over food stocks increased. The landlord became the principal food hoarder and the main source of blackmarketing in grains. The rich peasant also grew richer by grabbing the poor peasants' land and selling surplus stocks in the blackmarket at abnormally high prices. The landlord, the rich peasant, the

war-contractor and the dealer together constituted the new village rich, the criminal blackmarketing gang.

As a result of these developments the number of middle peasants dwindled and the poor and landless peasants have grown in number to an unprecedented scale. A small percentage of middle peasants has swollen the ranks of rich peasants. Disintegration of the middle peasantry is an outstanding fact of the new period.

Mass evictions of poor peasants by landlords and rich peasants intensified the new class differentiation in rural society. Small-peasant economy is thus passing through a deep crisis.

The burden on the middle and poor peasants and other semiproletarians of the village was much more than the Rs 1600 crore taken by Britain in the shape of sterling balances. For, apart from this, the blackmarketeers and speculators netted crores from the peasantry.

The end of the war therefore saw the sharp polarisation of the classes and intensified class-antagonism in the villages. The middle, poor and landless peasants began militant struggles as in 1946 against the new village rich, the landlords and the prosperous peasants.

Agrarian economy, under the control of the new village rich, the food-hoarders and land-grabbers, is already on the brink of a precipice. The parasitic landlords, rich peasants and other blackmarketeers have been ruining agriculture; while the poor peasant is to toil, the parasites are only to grab. Agricultural production is therefore deteriorating very fast, famine has become a normal phenomenon.

This meant, on the one hand, peasants' fights against land-relations and big mass struggles. It, at the same time, meant the accentuation of the contradiction involved in a capitalist development of the colonies. It meant a narrowing of the market for capitalist goods—the peasant becoming less and less of a buyer.

Every step forward in establishing capitalist relations, in the advance of largescale industry, transport, etc., was

accompanied by growing impoverishment of the peasantry and a consequent narrowing down of the market.

Both the imperialists and the national bourgeoisie relied on the vast millions to be their market. Both found that with their method of exploitation the market must go on narrowing.

The contradiction involved in capitalism itself narrowing its market was stated by Engels:\*

"For it is one of the necessary corollaries of *grande industrie* that it *destroys* its own home market by the process by which it *creates* it. It creates it by destroying the basis of the domestic industry of the peasantry. But without domestic industry the peasantry cannot live. They are ruined as *peasants*; their purchasing power is reduced to a minimum; and until they, as *proletarians*, have settled down into new conditions of existence, they will furnish a very poor market for the newly-arisen factories."

In India not only was the peasant's domestic industry destroyed but he was deprived of his land also. Hence the maintenance of feudal relations meant a continuous narrowing of the market.

All these contradictions have burst forth with great force during and after the war.

The predatory method of war-finance—inflation—has accentuated all these contradictions and brought Indian agriculture to a collapsing point.

The deepening world crisis of capitalism will hit the toiling peasants most. The prices of agricultural commodities will fall faster than that of industrial goods, and the process of largescale expropriation of the toiling peasants will be quickened still further.

All these will set in motion colossal class forces. the toiling peasants and rural artisans will pass on to the offensive against landlordism and the imperialist-bourgeois-feudal state to overthrow the colonial social order. Aboli-

\* Letter of Engels to Danielson, 22 September 1892, *Marx-Engels Correspondence*, National Book Agency, Calcutta, p 439.

tion of all forms of landlordism and all land to the tillers is the battle-cry of the fighting toiling peasants.

The agrarian areas of India have become a huge volcano which has started erupting every now and then. The desperation of the peasant is seen in the great tebhaga struggle of Bengal, the Telangana struggle of the nizam's dominion, the struggle of the aboriginal Warlis of Bombay, the great struggles of the peasants of Bihar for bakasht land and the militant kisan struggles in Malabar and Tamilnadu.

Out of the several uncoordinated struggles is coming forth the single demand: "Abolition of all forms of landlordism, land to the tillers." All ways lead to the agrarian revolution.

### *Industry and War*

The imperialist policy towards industry during the war, together with the impoverishment of the peasantry, now determines the character of the industrial crisis.

Following its usual policy of obstructing industrial development, imperialism did not permit any expansion of industries during the war, afraid that such industry might compete with the industry at home. While in the USA the means of production increased by 50 per cent and in Britain by 25 per cent, in India there was no increase whatsoever.

Imperialism also prevented machinery for replacement coming to India. Wartime industrial production was mainly increased by multiple shifts and not by adding to the means of production. There was hardly any new avenue of employment opened out for the Indian people.

Industry would have collapsed during the war period because of the narrow peasant market. In fact industrial production did start falling during the war itself in spite of the most favourable circumstances. Had the war not come, industrial production might have totally collapsed.

Indian industry sustained itself during the war on the basis of huge government orders. Government orders were worth Rs 28 crore in 1939-40 and by 1942-43 they rose to Rs 247 crore. In 1944-45 itself they were Rs 145 crore.

The military took 54 million yards of cloth in 1939, 211 million in 1940, 372 million in 1941, 852 million in 1942, 601 million in 1943, 802 million in 1944, and 575 million in 1945.

Out of a total production of cement of 17,33,000 tons in 1939-40, the military took 8,74,000 tons: in 1940, out of a total production of 17,27,000 tons it took 10,39,000 tons, and so on. Thus in 1940 it bought nearly 60 per cent of the total production of cement while in 1942 nearly 90 per cent.

This enormous and steady market ensured by government orders had a double advantage. On the one hand, the market for goods was assured; on the other hand, government orders, by creating scarcity for civilian consumption, sent prices rocketing high and enabled the employers to garner huge profits.

The prices of all industrial commodities rose enormously, except in one or two cases. The cloth price-index rose from 100 in 1939-40 to 442 in 1943-44 and remained at 262 in 1946-47. The coal price-index rose from 100 in 1939 to 174 in 1943, 282 in 1944 and 304 in 1945. Pig iron rose from 100 in 1939 to 117 (controlled) in 1944 and subsequent years. Jute rose from 100 in 1939 to 238 in 1943, 270 in 1944, 251 in 1945.

Obviously industry would have had no chance with this rise in prices at a time when the market was getting impoverished and the mass of the peasantry was getting pauperised.

The price structure of industrial goods was totally at variance with the purchasing power of the people.

But industry continued because of the huge government orders which offered a stable market.

Secondly, it sustained itself on those sections of the people which had grown rich during the war, or those which had a greater purchasing power, etc.—a small and narrow section—but which offered enough market to take a good part of what was left by the military or the government.

The question of the market was thus temporarily solved, in spite of the impoverishment of the masses.

But with the close of the war and the falling off of government orders, the problem of market once more faces the industry.

First, the fact that new industries are not being built, the fact that erection of new factories is not yet taking place, is an important factor in the narrowing of the market. It follows logically from the imperialist policy of denying any capital goods to India till a deal is put through. It follows from the very colonial status of India.

Secondly, when all these goods have to be consumed by the people, directly or indirectly industry comes up against a pauperised people, whose purchasing power has been drastically limited or destroyed and who can no longer buy the products of the industry.

The wartime market, composed of the rich and upper-middleclass strata, etc., is no longer sufficient, since now the question is of selling the entire production and not only that part left by the military.

The same process which accumulated an enormous quantity of capital in the hands of the capitalists has destroyed their market. Inflation and wartime exploitation robbed the masses of their capacity to pay not only the imperialist masters but also the Indian capitalists, and have led to the killing of the market on a large scale. It is this contradiction which the capitalists have to solve if their industries are to move.

But the close of the war has intensified the market crisis. Apart from the peasantry, etc., other sections are also being deprived of this purchasing power. The clerical staff of the government, the extra staff drafted for war purposes, the soldiers of the army and other branches of defence, men from ordnance depots, government transport, railways, docks, etc., tens of thousands who represented some purchasing power are being thrown out of jobs, thus intensifying the crisis of the market.

It is already reported that nearly half a million soldiers



are demobilised; several thousands of government servants are being retrenched from all departments.

This of course means that the market will not be able to absorb the same quantity of production—goods will be surplus and remain unsold, and production will decline. This in its turn results in closing down of factories, in workers being thrown out of jobs, reduction in wages, etc.—thus causing a still further decline in the purchasing power of the people and narrowing the market.

Already industrial production was declining in the midst of the war itself. Coal rose from 27 million tons in 1939 to 29 million tons in 1942 and then dropped to 25 million tons in 1943, 26 million in 1944 and had not yet come to the 1942 level in 1945.

Pig iron dropped from two million tons in 1941 to 1.4 million tons in 1945—a decline of nearly 20 per cent over 1939-40. Jute manufactures dropped from 1.2 million tons in 1941 to one million tons in 1943 and 1.1 million tons in 1945. Cloth production rose from 4012 million yards in 1939-40 to 4871 million yards in 1943-44—a figure which is vitiated by the bogus standard-cloth production—and then declined to 4676 million yards in 1945-46, and is said to be near the prewar figure now.

No doubt part of the decline is due to want of replacement of old machinery; part is also due to concealment of figures for purposes of blackmarket transactions. But, nonetheless, there is a real decline, and that is seen from the fact that in these years industrial stoppages increased involving loss of millions of working days.

The increasing strike wave, specially in 1945-46 and 1946-47, was the outcome of the resistance of the capitalists to workingclass demands, of the attempt to pass additional burdens on it, in their desperation to lower the costs of production at the expense of the workers, so that the market should expand and not narrow down. It was a recognition on the part of the capitalists that with existing prices the market would shrink continuously. But intent on keeping the old profits, they began to apply the axe on

workers' incomes and brought about stoppages of production. The decline in production was thus directly due to the capitalist way of securing a market which was rapidly contracting.

The paradox of declining production when there is shortage of goods must properly be understood.

The process of impoverishment of the masses has gone to such an extreme limit that today they are left with hardly any purchasing power to buy the goods produced at the existing high prices. With the cancellation of government orders, large quantities of goods are now thrown on the regular market. In terms of the needs of the people, they are not enough. But in relation to the prices—legal and blackmarket—charged for them, they are beyond the means of the people.

Ordinarily this would have expressed itself as over-production, with goods remaining unsold and workers losing their jobs. But the prevailing inflation and the depreciated purchasing power in the hands of many creates an illusion that it is all a question of shortage only; that people have enough purchasing power to buy, only the goods are not there in sufficient quantity.

In reality the present shortage of goods is only the reverse side of the process of impoverishment through inflation. Inflation, which robbed India of goods worth millions of rupees during the war years, was also an instrument of effecting a forcible redistribution of the national dividend among India's various classes. It made the rich richer and the poor poorer. While it enriched enormously the capitalists and put large sums of money in the hands of certain other selected groups—top professionals, high government officials, upper-middleclass people—it decisively impoverished the bulk of the people, thus limiting their capacity to buy.

It is these latter people, the vast majority of Indians, who suffer from shortage because they cannot afford to buy the goods at the existing high rates. The former, the

rich, create the illusion of prosperity, of infinite purchasing power, ready to buy everything, and form the main customers of the blackmarkets as well as of open markets.

Merchants and traders continue to buy large quantities for purposes of speculation and blackmarket, hoping that they would be able to dispose of them in a short time. They want to get rid of the depreciating money and buy commodities which go on appreciating under conditions of inflation. The investments in commodity seem to be the safest, since every day they go on appreciating in value. The blackmarket prices are so lucrative that the merchant is assured of good profits even if he sells only a part of his goods. Everyone knows that there are always large stocks in the blackmarket which are not disposed of and yet the blackmarket thrives.

But if the existing price levels continue, a saturation point will soon be reached in the blackmarket; merchants and traders will find that the hope of disposing of the blackmarket stocks is not to be fulfilled and the brisk sales, which go on today because everyone believes that there is shortage and infinite demand for goods, will stop. The truth will be out that there are not too little but too many goods at the existing level of prices.

Inflation and speculation, arising from it, conceal the real nature of the crisis of which a warning is already given by the decline in production.

The policy of decontrol embarked upon by the government means that the bourgeoisie has already recognised that the blackmarket has reached a saturation point, that at the level of blackmarket prices goods cannot be sold in large quantities.

Decontrol therefore is a device to widen the market in a special way—prices will fall compared with the blackmarket rates but will rise compared with the control rates.

It is an effort to reach a wider section of well-placed people, while keeping out the large mass as before. It is a device to distribute goods according to means and remove

all barriers in the way of selling in the best possible market to the upper strata of the population in as large a quantity as possible.

Thus the profit-motive of the capitalists intensifies the crisis at every step. They must keep prices high in order to make huge profits. But these prices are at variance with the purchasing power of the bulk of the people—which means that the needs of the latter will not be satisfied and the goods of the capitalists will remain unsold. The profit-greed of the capitalists has driven the workers to desperation; it is keeping goods out of the reach of the common man, and, in its search for profitable markets, causing a collapse of production.

The crisis thus arises from the imperialist loot of the war period, from the imperialist obstruction to industrial development, from the redistribution of the national income through inflation, from the profit-hunt of the capitalists, and from the colonial character of India's agricultural relations.

How do the capitalists and the national government seek a way out of this crisis? What are their plans of avoiding a decline in production?

Their plans lie within the framework of colonial economy, of imperialist economy.

Afraid of the masses and their initiative, afraid to interfere with property rights and thus create a precedent for interference in capitalist property, especially in the context of the growing demand for nationalisation of industries—the Indian capitalist class and the national government are opposed to the liquidation of the old feudal order, which alone will release the peasant masses from the yoke of feudalism and stop the process of impoverishment.

The release from feudalism will make the peasant a good customer, a good market, but the social consequences of the step, they fear, will be such that the people might

march forward and take charge of the entire national economy, dethroning the bourgeoisie from its privileged position.

That is why, both politically and economically, the bourgeoisie compromised with imperialism and the feudal-landlord bloc.

The economic collaboration with landlords expresses itself in the so-called land bills which retain landlordism in one form or another and thus ruin all chances of expanding the market among the vast bulk of the peasantry. The agrarian bills of the Congress ministries with their insistence on compensation, with no provision for land to the tiller, with at best some concessions to the richer upper strata of the peasantry, keep the old land-relations intact and impoverishment on the increase.

In these most favourable circumstances, the market is somewhat extended only among the upper section of the peasants who are granted concessions and get new opportunities of grabbing land from the poor peasants. If the rights of the landlords are somewhere touched, it is only in order to help a section below them—a wider section—but not to give relief to the mass of the peasantry.

For the rest, the national government and the bourgeoisie hope to save Indian agriculture by means of extension of irrigation facilities, manure, hydroelectric dams, of bringing new land under cultivation—all the old familiar schemes of imperialism which seek to achieve a miracle in agrarian conditions without changing the precapitalist land-relations.

The hope that through these a prosperous, middle, independent peasantry will be stabilised—with feudal relations dominating land—is a fond hope doomed to failure.

The national bourgeoisie therefore, in its compromise with imperialism and feudalism, has set its face against revolutionary changes in agrarian relations, thereby announcing its bankruptcy to raise either the standard of living of the peasant or the production on land. It is thus

incapable of utilising the vast potential market that exists, and organise the rapid industrialisation of India. That is why there can hardly be any genuine industrial development of India on capitalist lines, ending her colonial character. At every step the attempts to develop on capitalist lines come in conflict with the capitalist collaboration with the imperialist-feudal combine, which destroys the market and hampers industrial growth.

In the postwar crisis therefore the capitalists and the national government do not have any plan of getting out of the crisis except one of maintaining the old order on the basis of repression and force. For the vast masses of India, the rural millions, they offer nothing except feudal and landlord tyranny, sanctified now by the bourgeoisie in its base compromise with imperialism; they offer nothing except the upholding of the old imperialist order which kept India backward on the basis of precapitalist relations in agriculture.

Fear of the agrarian revolution, arising out of the fear of a political revolution, forces the bourgeoisie to solve the crisis within the framework of the imperialist-colonial order and thus get into an insoluble contradiction. On this basis therefore not only expansion of industries is not possible but even retention of the present production level is becoming impossible.

How then do the bourgeoisie and the national government attempt to solve the crisis on the industrial front? Having decided to keep the large masses of people in poverty, the only hope for production is to produce with sweated labour, low wage-costs and intensification of the labour process.

The bourgeoisie and the national government thus attempt to find a way out of the crisis by brutally lowering wage-costs, attacking the workers in all directions, demanding a restoration of the nine-hour day, stopping all further wage concessions and attacking the wage standards of the working class, introducing rationalisation and

retrenchment where possible so that wage-costs are reduced. They attempt to bring production near to the impoverished people by impoverishing the workers as well and thus accentuating the crisis.

The capitalist way thus means misery for the peasant, misery for the worker, misery for the middle class, and, in the bargain, an allround decline in production.

The bourgeoisie starts by raising the cry about shortage of production and then concentrates fire on the working-class strikes. Its demand is that the working class should tamely submit to wage-cuts, etc., to guarantee capitalist profits and enable the capitalists to secure markets at the expense of the working class. To this end the national government and the Congress ministries introduce anti-strike legislation and suppress the workers' resistance to facilitate the capitalist offensive.

The capitalists and the national government are moving towards an attack on the eight-hour day so that the employers get one hour's labour without much extra cost and are able to reduce costs and make profits.

The national government helps the capitalists in their rationalisation of industries, no wage legislation, complete freedom for them to deal with labour, and pass on the burden of the crisis to the workers.

All this, by reducing the purchasing power of the people, intensifies the crisis instead of solving it.

But, nonetheless, for the capitalists there is no way out. They must forcibly make the workers accept low wage standards and suppress them to keep production going. They must also keep the peasantry enslaved.

Naturally, in these circumstances, the Indian capitalists look to foreign markets for absorbing their goods which the Indian market cannot absorb because of the poverty of the people. They are looking more and more to the foreign markets not only for an outlet for present surplus goods, but also for exporting goods of the industries which they hope to build in the near future.

The collapse of the Indian market makes the capitalists

more dependent on foreign markets which only America and Britain can offer.

This leads to two results:

First, it means further intensification of attacks against labour to increase the competitive capacity of the Indian industry in foreign markets.

Second, it leads to deals with foreign capitalists, to allow them the right of joint exploitation of the Indian market, joint investment in return for exports and supply of capital goods. This means guarantees about no nationalisation of industries, of return on capital and of putting down labour firmly. It also means acceptance of only such industrial expansion as is permitted either by Britain or America, and, for the rest, retention of the old colonial order. All talk of planning, prosperity, abolition of Indian poverty, etc. disappears with this policy, this attempt to get out of the crisis.

That is why the national government no longer talks about planning; that is why it has given an assurance to the capitalists in the industries conference that at least for five years to come there will be no nationalisation; that is why it is passing antistrike legislation and enabling the employers to pass on the burdens of the crisis to the workers and the people. That is why it has removed controls to enable the capitalists to make profits.

The conditions attaching to the export of Indian goods abroad are such that exports will not solve the crisis but intensify it at every step and Indian collaboration with Britain and America will only intensify the misery of the people, ruining both industry and agriculture.

The capitalist way therefore is opposed on all fronts by the people, by the workers, by the peasants, by the students and by the middle class.

As against the capitalist plan of retaining Indian misery by retaining the existing land-relations, by attacking wage-standards, forcing prolongation of the working hours, demanding higher prices for goods



or decontrol, demanding uncontrolled profits and opposing nationalisation, attacking trade unions and strikes and suppressing workers and peasants, demanding mass retrenchment and rationalisation—the needs of the people demand planning in economic life based on the abolition of landlordism and land to the tiller, nationalisation of key and vital industries with workers' control over them, nationalisation of banks; living wage, trade-union recognition, right to strike, and social security to workers; living wage for middleclass employees, security of service and pension; control of profits; confiscation of British capital, etc.

This way alone the contradiction between production and a narrowing market can be solved, a contradiction arising solely out of the capitalist character of production.

On the basis of these, the people can plan ahead, organise production for the needs of the people, increase it by common efforts for common good and distribute it on the basis of labour performed—so that a planned prosperous economy is possible for the people.

The two ways out of the crisis are diametrically opposed.

The capitalist way is that of safeguarding profits by intensifying the misery of the people, of guarding the old colonial order in collaboration with imperialism, and of perpetuating and intensifying Indian misery; while the workers' and the people's way is to solve the crisis by uprooting the root cause—the colonial order—with its imperialist-feudal-bourgeois exploitation. The capitalists can only attain their objective by suppressing the people, defeating the workers' and peasants' movements and establishing a naked dictatorship of force, i.e. by suppressing the political liberties of the people. The capitalist way is not only one of economic misery but of political suppression and slavery.

That is why the working class and other toiling people must defeat the capitalist policy and successfully solve the

crisis in the interests of the people. This means that they must defeat the capitalist-landlord offensive and the policies which help them and see to it that their movement is not terrorised by force.

In the partial struggles, strikes, political conflict, these two ways face each other. The capitalist way drives the masses to accept the challenge every day, makes their condition unbearable and unleashes the upsurge all round.

#### V. AGAINST IMPERIALIST-BOURGEOIS CONSPIRACY FORGE A NEW CLASS ALLIANCE : PROGRAMME OF DEMOCRATIC FRONT

##### *Masses Fight Back*

The establishment of the Congress ministries and subsequently of the national government, the communal offensive launched by reaction and the disruptive role played by the Congress have not diminished the postwar upsurge. Its causes lie deeper than the mere formation of government, for they directly follow from the exploitation of the Indian masses which has reached unbearable proportions.

Though the Congress leaders in the beginning were successful in creating new hope among the people that things could be remedied through the national government, the process of disillusionment has been quickened since 15 August, and the upsurge is asserting itself more and more. Through their common fights and day-to-day struggles, through their cooperation for their demands, all these sections more and more come to realise that their poverty and exploitation can be ended only by a triumph of the democratic movement. Never was there so much understanding of the main slogans of the democratic movement; abolition of landlordism and land to the tiller; abolition of autocracy; nationalisation of key industries and a living wage as the cornerstone of any stable life for the people.

But today the people in their disillusionment are learning something more, and that is that a government manned by leaders in whom they had utmost faith cannot discharge a single responsibility and cannot give them either land, peace or bread. More and more the people are coming to the conclusion that the national government is guided by the vested interests; more and more they are seeing the link between the Indian capitalists and the national leaders. Out of this disillusionment will come the demand for another government, and it is the duty of the Communist Party to consciously guide the people in fighting for that demand boldly and decisively.

The programme of the democratic movement can be implemented only when the state-power belongs to classes which are interested in full democracy and from which all opponents of democracy are excluded. Such a state will be based on the alliance of workers, peasants and the oppressed petty bourgeoisie, under the leadership of the working class. It will be a people's democratic state based on the alliance of anti-imperialist classes, workers, peasants and the oppressed petty bourgeoisie, under the leadership of the working class, and from which all collaborationists and exploiting elements are excluded. It will be based upon direct rule of the toiling people in place of the present bureaucratic system.

The existing correlation of forces, in which every step forward of the popular struggle is to be taken not only in opposition to imperialism but in opposition to the bourgeoisie also, clearly shows that the old phase of the bourgeois-democratic revolution is over, a phase in which the bourgeoisie was in the anti-imperialist camp. Today the entire trend of events demands a democratic state of workers, toiling peasants and the oppressed petty bourgeoisie as the only rallying slogan to surge forward to the defeat of imperialism and its bourgeois allies, and emancipation of the people. It means that people's democratic revolution has to be achieved for the completion of the tasks of democratic revolution and the simultaneous building up of socialism.

This can be assured by establishing firmly the leadership of the working class over the other sections of the toiling people.

### *New Class Alliance*

To defeat the bourgeois-imperialist conspiracy, to defeat the combine of imperialism, feudalism and the bourgeoisie, it is necessary to marshal the forces of the revolutionary people in a new way, i.e. to forge a new alliance of all the classes for whom the success of the democratic revolution is vital. The democratic state cannot be realised without such an alliance and unity of the people.

The spontaneous movement of the workers, peasants and middle classes against economic exploitation and political repression itself gives the form of the new front. It is the duty of the working class and the Communist Party to combine this growing upsurge into a new democratic front reflecting the unity of the fighting masses. The basis of this new democratic front is the common struggle against exploitation and political subjection. The front will therefore include the fighting masses and all those fighting organisations which help it to go forward against the treacherous policy of the national bourgeoisie and the designs of imperialism.

The Communist Party, the working class and the mass organisations led by the Communist Party will be the core of this front. The militant following of the left parties and all genuine leftists in these parties will be important partners in the front. The front will grow by drawing inside it the entire fighting masses as well as the anti-imperialist following of the Congress and the League so that the broadest unity of the common people can be built in the struggle for freedom and democracy.

It must be clearly understood that though the front will include several political parties, trade unions, kisan sabhas, student and youth organisations and other bodies, it will not be a mere coalition of several organisations. On the

contrary, it must become the genuine fighting alliance of the masses against imperialism, feudalism and the bourgeoisie.

For building such a front the communists shall seek the cooperation of all left parties and elements. They will strive to establish unity of action with left parties. But the cardinal thing for the communists to remember is that the struggle for building the democratic front is inseparable from the struggle to establish workingclass hegemony, i.e. to win the peasantry and the petty bourgeoisie for the fighting programme and policy of the working class.

It must also be stressed that in course of its development the democratic front will have to be directed, through persistent struggle for a common programme and progressive realisation of workingclass leadership towards a disciplined and firmly united mass political organisation functioning democratically and based solidly on the unity of the people.

The democratic front therefore must not be looked upon as an organisation representing a top alliance between left parties. It is a front based on the masses. It is an alliance between the working class, the peasantry and the progressive intelligentsia. This front becomes strong and capable of decisive action to the extent that it becomes unified both politically and organisationally under workingclass leadership, to the extent that the working class secures the confidence of its allies and is able to win them for its programme and policy.

Unless the communists realise all this, there is every danger of repeating the mistakes of the past, of right-opportunism masquerading as left unity, and making the working class trail behind the vacillating class.

Under the impact of the crisis and as the result of growing disillusionment with the government, larger and larger sections of masses will be set in motion. The process of radicalisation will be hastened even among the most backward strata. It will be the task of the democratic front to

draw all these sections in the common movement, forge the fighting alliance of the people, coordinate and integrate the various partial struggles and develop them as part of the fight for the ending of imperialist-feudal-bourgeois domination. Only under the firm guidance of the working class and only by developing as the united mass organisation of the fighting people, the democratic front can carry out these tasks.

### *United Front with Left Parties*

The united front of left parties in the present situation will be a powerful lever to build the new front, disillusioning and activating the Congress and League masses, the states' peoples and other sections, and in building a united movement for the democratic revolution.

The independent strength of the Communist Party of India and the general leftward swing of the people enhance immensely the strength of left forces and make them the base and spearhead of the new unity.

The Communist Party must therefore seek immediate agreements with left parties for joint action, for common understanding of the problems of the democratic movement and for building a front against the compromisers and their real masters. At the same time, the party must note that discredited and dishonest elements and groups sometimes come forward as a left force, exploiting the anti-capitalist and anti-imperialist anger of the masses. The party must expose and fight such groups, especially groups having connection with organisations or professing policies which are internationally accepted as counterrevolutionary.

The building of the democratic front is a process of struggle. It advances through a series of joint campaigns and partial struggles, jointly conducted, and through local united fronts between the party and the local Congress and League masses—even committees wherever possible—between the left parties and the Congress and League

masses at other places, between the party and other mass organisations in still other places. The fundamental basis however is the independent activity of the proletarian party and its capacity to lead struggles of the masses and draw new masses into the fighting arena. The core of the new front would be the Communist Party together with the mass organisations led by the party, trade unions, kisan sabhas and students' and youth organisations. Round this must be gathered the militant following of the left parties, vast masses from the Congress, the League, the States' Praja Mandals, etc. so that a broad democratic front takes shape to meet the new situation.

In many provinces organised left groups do not exist. There are thousands of unattached leftists in all provinces. Unity of the left parties is a weapon of drawing these thousands into the common front for joint action. In the south we must devote special attention to the unorganised left; for left unity will mean drawing these unattached thousands into the common fight. In other provinces also left unity ought to be an instrument of attracting unorganised leftists who will now find an effective platform and instrument for implementing their left aspirations. It will also attract other progressive congressmen on specific issues.

### *Congress, League and the Democratic Front*

The relation of the Congress and the League to the democratic front must be properly understood.

Both these organisations command the loyalty of lakhs of people, of vast sections of the anti-imperialist masses. Desperate attempts will be made by the leaders of these two organisations to keep these masses away from the struggle for the democratic revolution and from the democratic front by exploiting old loyalties and the memories of the anti-imperialist struggles. The forces of the democratic movement will be weak and paralysed if the bourgeois leaderships succeed in keeping the masses under the influ-

ence of these organisations away from the democratic front.

The Communist Party must devote the utmost attention to winning these masses away from the influence of the bourgeois leaders through propaganda, joint campaigns and joint struggles.

Great and vital importance therefore attaches to bringing the masses of these two organisations inside the democratic front, in opposition to their leaders. It is therefore essential that the leftists who are associated with those organisations should carry on a persistent battle, both inside and outside these organisations, to unmask the policies of the leaderships and win over the masses for the democratic revolution and for joining the democratic front.

The Congress with its sixty-year-old tradition of anti-British fight, and with the memories of national battles that it rouses, sways lakhs of anti-imperialists who earnestly desire to move forward. The name of the Congress is today used by the bourgeois leaders to keep popular opinion behind them in support of their collaborationist policy. What the people are unable to accept from the central government and the provincial ministries is pushed through the Congress and public criticism is paralysed.

To abandon the fight for the Congress masses, to ignore their important role in the democratic front, will be tantamount to making a present of lakhs of people to the bourgeois leaders. Every attempt must be made to win over the Congress masses, to carry the fight against the bourgeois leadership right inside the Congress organisation itself on every burning issue. The Congress leadership however will neither accept the programme of the democratic front nor come into the front, because it represents the bourgeoisie as a class and that class has gone collaborationist. But it is vital to win the Congress masses for the democratic movement. The Communist Party therefore attaches great importance to the work of consistent anti-imperialists and democrats inside the Congress, the work of disillusioning the masses and pressing forward for a democratic programme.



### *The Socialist Party*

The Communist Party of India must take into consideration both the importance of the united front of the left and its limitations.

Under the stress of the crisis and the militancy of the masses, under the stress of the August struggle and disillusionment of large sections of congressmen with the rightwing leadership, left-minded elements strongly opposed to the capitalists are drawn to the Socialist Party. In places like Bombay, the Socialist Party has also a workingclass base. In places like Calcutta, it counts among its members old trade-union leaders. It has a large number of honest elements in its ranks who seek to work among the kisans, workers, students, to build mass organisations.

The rightwing Congress leadership itself is afraid of the Socialist Party and at the same time wants to woo it.

The strength of the Socialist Party comes from the ranks who are overwhelmingly drawn from the petty bourgeoisie. The ranks hate the capitalists, are dissatisfied with the Nehru government and the compromise and want to move forward. They consider themselves socialists; in fact they are left-nationalists. Nonetheless their urge for socialism is real and though they are kept away from it by the misleading policies of their leadership, they constitute a current orientating towards the proletariat.

The building up of the united front of the left involves the winning over of their ranks for the common task of pushing forward the democratic revolution and establishing a democratic state.

But the aspirations and the orientations of the left ranks must be separated from the leadership and the programme of the Socialist Party. The ranks are being poisoned by the antiworkingclass theories and formulations of the socialist leadership, are given a distorted idea about socialism and the international situation and are continually poisoned against the Communist Party and the revolutionary movement. Sharp exposure of the "socialism" of the

socialist leaders, their theoretical presumptions, their anti-Soviet and anticommunist line, and their stand on Indian questions is an integral part of the struggle to build the united front of the left.

In exposing the socialist leadership it must be remembered that the leadership, barring the four or five at the top, has no uniform policy. In such cases a differentiated approach should be made.

The programme and policy laid down by the top leaders of the Socialist Party, including Jayaprakash Narayan, Achyut Patwardhan, Ram Manohar Lohia and Asoka Mehta, clearly reveal that behind the talk of socialism lurks the sinister design to exploit the left discontent of the ranks to transform the Socialist Party into a bourgeois-constitutional party—his majesty's constitutional opposition, so to say. Both their international outlook and national outlook reveal the same thing.

In its recent programme which is supposed to be a transitional programme to socialism, the first stage in India's evolution towards socialism, the party suggests a banal programme of administrative reforms, the high watermark of its democracy not going beyond responsibility of the executive to the legislature. It requires an amazing boldness in these days to parade mere responsibility to the legislature as a transitional step to socialism.

While the programme prattles about India being a republic, of expropriation of private property and enterprise "with or without compensation", it nowhere mentions struggle as being necessary for it. It pins its faith in constitutional opposition and acts as if the democratic revolution is already complete, the people are in power and all that remains to be done is to take transitional steps to socialism.

It openly preaches the illusion that socialism can be achieved by constitutional means. It covers its advocacy of constitutionalism by calling it "democratic means".

In their demands for constitutional rights the socialist leaders do not include the right of selfdetermination of

national units like Andhra, Tamilnadu, or Maharashtra, and reveal that they have learnt nothing from recent Indian history.

In their economic programme they suggest the possibility of compensation before nationalising private property, and they do not necessarily demand immediate nationalisation of heavy industries. On the contrary their demand is immediate or early nationalisation, thus seeking an excuse to postpone nationalisation.

They talk of abolition of landlordism, living wage, etc., but having given up all struggle to change the social order, not having the courage to demand nationalisation at least in their programme, everything else becomes just the words of a bourgeois leadership giving electoral promises.

On the concrete issues of day-to-day importance, the Socialist Party leaders adopt antipopular policies, support decontrol and help big business to exploit the people. They echo capitalist slanders about the working class not doing its duty, and help the bosses (Jayaprakash's letter to the railway board).

Forced by the ranks, they have to go in for strikes, but generally they oppose and even break strikes (strikes of drawers-in of Bombay textile mills and Asoka Mehta's admissions). They disrupt the unity of the trade union congress and the trade-union movement and help the bosses' offensive, though their ranks want unity.

They concentrate their fire on the Communist Party—the mass actions led by it—and shamelessly support repressive measures against it (Asoka Mehta's statement on the firing on Bombay students). Their members in the legislature support black measures like the public safety bill in Bengal and they oppose and break protest strikes against them.

They are strong opponents of left unity, of any cooperation with the Communist Party. They thus perform a disruptive role in the interests of the collaborationists.

From time to time the socialist leaders give it out that they are leaving the Congress. This is an attempt first of

all to pacify the ranks with left talk about secession from the Congress, for the ranks are fed up with the vacillating policies of their leadership and think that they are the inevitable consequences of remaining inside the Congress. The talk of leaving the Congress pleases the left ranks, for it opens before them prospects of independent and militant political activity in opposition to the compromising leadership of the Congress. The ranks hate the compromise and want to cut themselves off from the deadening grip of the policies of the Congress leadership and go in for an independent militant political line.

Nothing however is farther from the minds of the socialist leaders. At present the talk about secession from the Congress only serves to keep their left prestige with their ranks, and also it is a weapon of bargaining with the Congress leadership.

When the leadership decides to leave the Congress, it will not do it to go in for an independent revolutionary line but when it finds that it can now play the role of an independent bourgeois opposition party, a parliamentary party for the next election. The talk about secession from the Congress in the mouth of socialist leaders is only an advertisement of their future plan to contest elections independently under the new constitution and try their luck at the ballot box. It is the result of their maturing into constitutional bourgeois leaders and has not an iota of revolution in it.

Their statement of policy reveals that they have drawn their theoretical understanding and appraisal of international events from the extreme rightwing social-democrats of Europe and America.

They repeat the worst slanders about the Soviet Union, calling it a totalitarian state and making it plain that they are opposed to a real socialist revolution.

In their foreign policy they follow the hypocritical Bevin in advocating a 'third' group—which is only a cover to conceal their political alignment with American imperialism.

In their statement of policy they deliberately omit all reference to American imperialism, which means they will follow its dictates. Instead of concretely pointing out that a conflict does exist between the two camps—the camp of democracy and the camp of imperialism—they pose the conflict as being between Russia and the rest of the nations of UNO, thus screening American imperialism and its designs against democracy and freedom of all peoples and its conspiracy against the socialist state.

And finally, by a sleight of hand, they seek to do away with the main contradiction between capitalism and the working class by saying that the main contradiction is between advanced and backward countries—thus making a crude appeal to bourgeois nationalism and hiding the fact that the struggle of backward countries is part of the struggle for world socialism and against the capitalist order.

This outlook enables them to say that a socialist of backward countries must be an assertive nationalist, i.e. it draws and lends justification to any cooperation with any imperialist power in the name of nationalism.

The leadership of the Socialist Party is attempting to transform it into a collaborationist party behind the facade of socialist phrases.

It must be ideologically unmasked and fought, and the ranks must be taught to see it in its real colours.

The ranks themselves do not accept this programme wholly. The Socialist Party is not a unified party but a heterogeneous combination. In winning over the ranks these points must be noted.

Nonetheless a merciless ideological struggle must be carried on against the leadership. The ranks must be won over on the basis of Marxism which a large section accepts, and on the basis of concrete issues, but we should have no illusions that the top leaders will ever agree to a joint front unless the ranks do it over their heads or press them to do it.

### *Programme of the Democratic Revolution*

The programme of the democratic front and the left parties should contain the following:

(1) Complete severance from the British empire and full and real independence.

(2) A democratic government representing the workers, toiling peasants and the oppressed petty bourgeoisie, opposed to collaboration with Anglo-American imperialism, allied to the democratic states working for peace and freedom of all nations.

(3) A constitution based on adult suffrage and proportional representation, guaranteeing full freedom and democracy to the common man and fundamental economic rights.

(4) Selfdetermination to nationalities, including the right of secession. A voluntary Indian union, autonomous linguistic provinces.

(5) Just and democratic rights of minorities to be embodied in the constitution: Equality and protection to the language and culture of minorities, all liabilities, privileges and discriminations on caste, race and community to be abolished by law, and their infringement to be punishable by law.

(6) Abolition of princedom and feudal rule in the Indian states and the establishment of full democracy. On the question of accession, exposure of the policies of the governments of both India and Pakistan of parading accession to the Indian union or Pakistan as a big triumph, and explanation to the common people that the urgent and primary task inside the states is the abolition of princedom and feudal rule and the establishment of a people's democratic state. Accession before that is only slavery of the states' people, both to princely autocracy and to the bourgeois rulers of the Indian union. It is only after the people of the states become completely free that they will have real liberty to decide the question of accession. At

that state the question will be decided by the wishes of the people.

(7) Freedom of the tribal and such other backward peoples from economic, cultural and political oppression, extension of full democratic rights to them, prompt and adequate state aid for their development, so that they may rapidly catch up with the advanced nationalities. The people of all contiguous, compact, predominantly tribal areas shall have regional autonomy. They may form autonomous areas within the provinces, enjoying full powers regarding general administration within the areas and specially regarding economic and cultural matters of regional importance. The people of such areas, in suitable cases, may also form separate province or provinces. The people of such areas or provinces shall have the right to secede from the state by a democratic verdict.

(8) Cooperation between the Indian union and Pakistan for mutual economic aid in the interest of the toiling people, military and political alliance against imperialist intervention and foreign aggression, democratic foreign policy in cooperation with democratic states against Anglo-American bloc.

(9) Abolition of landlordism without compensation and distribution of land to the tillers of the soil. Abolition of the zamindari system must mean confiscation of khas lands of the noncultivating landowners, and ensure land to subtenants and sharecroppers. Liquidation of rural indebtedness and abolition of usury. Living wage for the agricultural labourers.

(10) Confiscation by the state of interests of foreign capital in banks, industrial and transport concerns, plantations, mines, etc., and nationalisation of these concerns.

(11) Nationalisation of big industries, big banks and insurance companies, guarantee of workers' control, minimum living wage, eight-hour day, etc.

(12) Economic plan to develop India's resources and removal of big business from strategic economic points, Control of profits in the industries in private hands.

(13) Repeal of all repressive legislation.

(14) Elimination of the bureaucratic administrative state apparatus and the establishment of a democratic administration with elected officials, guided by people's committees.

(15) General arming of the people and the establishment of a people's democratic army.

(16) The right to free education and compulsory primary education.

(17) Equal democratic rights to women.

The democratic front, and the Communist Party in building it up, will fight communal reactionaries, riot-mongers and protagonists of war between the Indian union and Pakistan as enemies of the people. They will organise shanti senas, cooperate with all who stand for communal peace, and, in order to quell riots, will make use of every anti-riot measure of the government. At the same time they will expose the policy of national compromise which spreads riots and will call upon the people to defeat the game of the vested interests. They will also expose all communal acts of the members of the government which abet feudal reaction.

To start with it is not necessary that there should be a joint front of only those who agree with the entire programme of the democratic front. Immediate joint actions may start on specific questions. As joint actions develop and as left cooperation develops, the correctness of the programme will be self-evident to all democratic elements, and the front will be progressively realised as part of the experience of the left and the masses as a whole.

## **VI. TASKS OF THE PARTY IN THE STRUGGLE FOR PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC REVOLUTION**

The aim of the people's democratic revolution is to bring about those fundamental changes in our political



and social structure without which there can be no freedom and no prosperity for our common people. The present state will be replaced by a people's democratic republic—a republic of workers, peasants and oppressed middle classes. The bureaucratic administration will be dissolved and will be replaced by officials elected by the people, controlled by their committees and subject to recall. Landlordism will be abolished and land given to the tillers. All big banks and factories will be taken over by the state and run in the interest of the people and not for the profits of the few. Princely autocracy will be ended and the states' people freed from feudal and capitalist shackles.

On the basis of these changes the foundation will be laid for the building up of a socialist economy, for the ensuring of a happy and prosperous life for our people.

It will be the task of the Communist Party to work untiringly for these aims and to make this perspective the perspective of the entire democratic movement. It will be the task of the party to conduct and lead all struggles of workers, peasants and other toilers in such a manner as to develop them as part of a single movement for the realisation of this programme.

### *Tasks on the Trade-Union Front*

The working class under the leadership of the party has played a glorious role in the recent struggles. Today under the stress of the economic crisis, the working class is being attacked (Coimbatore, Kanpur, Bombay tram and port trust, etc.). Big battles are already taking place in Coimbatore and Kanpur.

The strike wave has gone on mounting and repression has failed to check it. Under the pressure of the economic crisis both the government and the capitalists are desperately trying to reduce wage-costs, i.e. to solve the crisis at the expense of the workers. Retrenchment, unemployment, cut in the dearness allowance and reduction in

wages, attempts to prolong working hours—these constitute the means by which the national government seeks to help the capitalists at the expense of the workers.

The recent 'industrial truce' conference was nothing but an open declaration of war against the working class. It shamelessly promised the capitalists that there would be no nationalisation for five years, it refused to accept the obligation for a living wage, it put profits and fair wages on the same level, making it quite clear that the capitalists were as much entitled to fair profits as the workers were to fair wages. It gave a promise of making provisions for industrial housing but in reality it only hastened to make provisions for illegalisation of strikes in the name of promoting industrial peace through arbitration.

This policy means that every effort will be made to launch an intensified offensive against workingclass standards and the government will use all its forces to crush the resistance of the working class. It also means that in future the arbitration courts and the arbitration machinery will be used more and more as weapons to put the workers at disadvantage, to deny them all their demands, take away the rights previously won and seek every excuse to illegalise strikes.

The perspective is therefore one of growing deterioration of the industrial situation in which every kind of repression will be used against the workers, every kind of misrepresentation will be made and the workers will be forced to mobilise all their strength to defeat the offensive.

The trade-union front therefore will have to bear the brunt of this offensive and defeat it with the might of the working class. At such a time workingclass rights and demands must be defended most decisively. Every care should be taken to see that the fight of the workers is not isolated from other sections of the workers and the people, whose sympathies or neutrality the national government will try to exploit.

The national government and the national leadership

attempt to hoodwink the people by talking about national reconstruction, and in its name launch an economic offensive against the working class. They exploit the existing scarcity of goods, the high prices that the people have to pay, and make it appear that the workers' strike struggles are responsible for this so-called shortage of goods. They appeal to middleclass sentiments and ignorance by declaring that illegalisation of strikes and the measures that they are suggesting will lead to increased production and prosperity, and that the people must support them in their plans. In talking about national reconstruction, the national government and the bourgeoisie exploit the people's desire and wish for a planned economic life and their anger against capitalist anarchy.

We must expose this bourgeois hoax of national reconstruction which is but another name for passing on the burden of the crisis to the workers and the people, through prolongation of the working day, reduction of wages, intensification of labour and mass unemployment.

We must expose that production is falling because of capitalist ownership and the crisis of capitalism, that the only way to improve it is to nationalise the means of production and remove the profit-motive from it. We should warn the people not to be a party to the reconstruction plan of the bourgeoisie which is only a profit-making plan.

We should not join in the hunt for preparing production plans, with the capitalist method of production intact and profits untouched. We should clearly show that the way of the capitalists and the government will reduce production and not increase it. The capitalist plan will only lead to crisis and to steep reduction in output.

We must make it clear that there can be no national reconstruction and no reorganisation of production without nationalisation of industries, without liquidating the colonial order, without implementing the programme of the democratic revolution, without giving a living wage to the workers.

Overwhelmed by bourgeois propaganda, some people are reluctant to advocate nationalisation of industries and a living wage as the basis of national reconstruction—thinking that this is too general and abstract a basis. Such elements fail to see that these are the most practical and concrete proposals and the only ones on the basis of which social order can be changed and production reorganised. Only those who are accustomed to think even of the democratic revolution as a distant perspective and do not believe in fighting for it at present, but want to argue on the basis of bourgeois practicality, will feel embarrassed before our immediate programme.

Therefore to ask the workers to produce more for the capitalist plans made for the purpose, when the working class is engaged in a bitter struggle to prevent worsening of its standard of living, is a call to sacrifice the workers to the bourgeoisie. Those who go this way are victims of bourgeois propaganda. We must expose and unmask the bourgeois plans, resist all attacks against the workers and boldly put forward nationalisation, control of profits, a living wage, etc. as our contribution to organising production. We must wage a consistent fight against the idea that nationalisation, etc. are not concrete proposals.

The trade unions and the party will have to put up the most decisive defence of workingclass interests. This will have to be done in a way in which not only the working class emerges victorious, but inspires the other classes—the middle class and the peasantry—with confidence in the common victory against the bourgeoisie. These struggles must unify the entire working class under common mass organisations and politically under the Communist Party. They will be the strongest levers to build the new democratic front, the new alliance of classes which is necessary to build a democratic state based on this alliance.

Today, more than ever, when in many places the working class is drawn in different directions—some sections directed to the Indian National Trade Union Congress

(INTUC), some sections to the Socialist Party, some confused by the stand of the national government—it is necessary to build the unity of the working class in each struggle. This unity may be achieved before the struggle or in the course of the struggle. Every effort must be directed towards this end, for workingclass unity can and shall be forged through the coming struggles against the effects of the growing economic crisis. This is so because the crisis hits every section of the working class and it is possible for us, if we adopt correct trade-union tactics, to draw every section of the working class into a common front of resistance to the employers. Such united struggles afford the best lessons to the working class on the treacherous role of the reformist trade-union leaders and on the need for revolutionary workingclass unity.

It is also necessary to counteract the mischievous propaganda of the national government and the bourgeoisie among the people and to win their sympathies, so that the struggles are not isolated and crushed. Today there is an overwhelming opinion in favour of strikes even in the middle class because they themselves have to go in for strikes for their own demands. This constitutes a big basis for winning popular sympathy, and how effective it can be is seen from the great fraternal demonstrations of the clerical workers of Calcutta in favour of the tramway strike.

In forging workingclass unity we must make it our special task to forge the unity of the Hindu and Muslim workers to fight communalism and see that our trade unions take an active part in protecting the minorities and making the working class aware of its basic duty towards itself and the minorities. The working class must be clearly warned that its trade-union struggle and the struggle for economic and political emancipation will be inevitably lost if communal barriers are not overcome in the class itself and if the class as a whole does not fight for the democratic rights of the minorities and does not take an active part in routing those who persecute the minorities.

Afraid of our growing strength in the working class, afraid of the strike struggles and convinced that mere repression will not crush the working class, the national bourgeois leadership, headed by Sardar Patel, has launched the INTUC to disrupt the ranks of the working class, to confuse the minds of the middle class and to slander every workingclass struggle. More and more the INTUC reveals itself as an appendage of the state, a labour front of the bourgeoisie in power which wants to disrupt the workingclass struggles, to serve the needs of the ruling bourgeoisie.

Its role is antistrike, anticommunist, antiworkingclass. Its policy is dictated by the national leadership, i.e. the bourgeoisie, and it acts as the unofficial arm of the national government in every strike and independent action of the working class. It is also becoming an agency through which strike-breakers and gangsters are recruited to terrorise the workers. It functions in cooperation with the police and the bosses and acts as their spy. It is being groomed to represent Indian labour in international conferences and replace the AITUC.

The following it has got in many places is due to the influence of the Congress, but it is getting discredited very quickly. Barring perhaps a few places, it has no mass following. The more it gets discredited in other places the more it bases itself on the supervisory staff, on paid hirelings, on factory officials, who compel the workers to pay subscriptions to its unions and ask the owners to victimise those who are opposed to it. The INTUC is not an ordinary reformist organisation, but one which is fast moving to become a hitlerite labour front. The role that it played recently in the Calcutta strike and the role of intimidation of workers, of attacking them with the help of goondas, is the real role of the INTUC and it will be used more and more till the workers are able to beat it back.

The attacks of goondas, the physical assaults on workers and the criminal intimidation practised by the INTUC are

an admission of the failure of the INTUC to win over the workers and a confession of its own bankruptcy.

The role of the INTUC unions therefore must be thoroughly unmasked and exposed in every workingclass meeting and the workers' anger must be roused against it. Every action against strike, every attempt at intimidating the workers, every act of betrayal must be unmasked so that the INTUC unions do not get any roots among the masses. Where the INTUC unions have mass influence, exposure should be combined with offers of united front on specific issues concerning wages, living conditions and offers of help in every action and struggle against the capitalists.

The Socialist Party leadership is another disruptive agency which together with the INTUC is making desperate efforts to isolate the AITUC, i.e. the vanguard of the organised working class gathered in the AITUC. It has seceded from the AITUC and has started rival unions in many places. It broke away from the AITUC after the INTUC was started and thus continued the work of disruption started by the INTUC. For fear of its ranks it dared not join the INTUC. At the same time it had neither sufficient courage nor loyalty to the working class to remain in the AITUC and fight jointly with the communists and others against the disruptive designs of the INTUC.

Though in some places like Bombay, under pressure from the workingclass ranks, the socialist leaders opposed the INTUC, still their general opposition to the INTUC has been a mild and polite opposition while their hostility to the AITUC is pronounced. They do not regard the government-sponsored INTUC as their enemy but concentrate their attacks on the AITUC in which is centralised the independent strength of the trade-union movement. While the socialist leaders would never have a united front with the AITUC they join hands, as in Calcutta, with the INTUC leaders to break up the unions of the AITUC (Calcutta tramway workers' strike).

Its unions in some places have a mass basis, the workers being attracted to the socialist leadership because of its left phraseology. The socialist leadership has attempted to stabilise this disruption by starting a new central organisation, thus splitting the ranks of the working class. The socialist leadership itself opposes and denounces strikes organised under our leadership, supports or condones measures of governmental repression against the working class under our leadership, and itself holds back the workers under its unions as much as possible.

If the Socialist Party leadership today leads any strikes it is because of the intense pressure of the rank and file. The unions led by the Socialist Party are generally active unions in which a lot of militant material is gathered. We must make offers of united front on every occasion to these unions and workers in their struggle; we should not identify them with the policy of the socialist leadership; and, at the same time, we should criticise the disruptive role of the socialist leadership in the workingclass movement.

Every occasion of halfhearted support to strikes or sabotaging of strikes by the socialist leadership must be condemned by us in a way which will unify the workers and attract them to the AITUC as the common organisation. Our offer of united front should gradually develop into a demand for one central organisation and a denunciation of the disruptive move of the leadership of the Socialist Party.

By our independent actions, decisive lead of strike struggles and increase in trade-union membership, we must enhance the strength of the AITUC and put it before the working class as the only class organisation consistently defending and fighting for its rights.

The national government is making serious endeavours to take away the representative character of the AITUC and thus remove it from international gatherings. This must be fought by making the working class aware of the danger and by immensely increasing the strength of the



AITUC. We have failed to carry the battle for the central organisation to the mass of workers belonging to the socialist unions. Had we done that, it would not have been easy for them to break away from the AITUC.

Today the AITUC has such tremendous prestige that newly-formed organisations automatically turn to it for guidance and affiliation. We must realise that the strength of the AITUC is the strength of the working class, and that the stronger the central organisation is the easier it is for the working class to fight its life-and-death battle against the economic crisis and capitalist attacks.

In the course of our strike struggles, we must, along with the immediate demands, popularise the demand for nationalisation of key industries, control of profits, a living wage, as the only way out of unemployment and wage reductions.

The tendency to look on such popularisation as abstract is reformist and must be fought, and the conduct of these partial struggles must be guided by the correct Marxian understanding that no partial gains are stable in the period of crisis unless the entire capitalist offensive is defeated all round. Therefore, while accepting whatever partial victories which may give immediate relief to the workers and are acceptable to them, we will ask the workers to be always vigilant and ready for any offensive that is likely to be launched, and for their basic demands which they must achieve.

And above all we will have no illusions that the arbitration courts appointed by bourgeois governments are likely to do justice to us. We will never have illusions that in times of economic crisis the desperate struggles between capital and labour can be solved through arbitration courts.

In defending and advancing the interests of the workers in these day-to-day struggles, we must so conduct the strikes that the working class gets unified as a class conscious of its political responsibility to struggle against the existing order and fight for a democratic state, conscious

that it must lead the struggle in the democratic alliance for the people to be victorious.

Along with the fight for the defence of its day-to-day interests, the working class will champion the cause of the people as a whole, and organise mass political actions on the widest scale against repressive acts and policies of the imperialist-bourgeois-feudal combine, against workers, peasants, students, states' people and minorities. Through solidarity actions, sympathetic strikes, protest demonstrations and other forms of political action, the working class will cement the fighting alliance of the masses and increasingly come out as the defender of democratic rights and liberties, as the leader, unifier and builder of the democratic front.

### *Tasks on the Peasant Front*

The central task on the peasant front is to rouse and lead the toiling peasants around the central slogan of "Land to the Tiller". Landlordism in all forms must be liquidated without any compensation to the landlords, khas land of the landlords and rich peasants must be distributed amongst the toiling peasants, and all forms of feudal and semifeudal exactions must go. The fight against eviction, against rent, against serfdom to the moneylender, for commutation of rent in kind into money, and for two-thirds share of the crop must be strengthened and developed into the fight for land to the tillers. The agricultural proletariat must be specifically organised under the All-India Kisan Sabha, either as a separate organisation affiliated to it or as a specially organised section within it, for fair wages and regulation of labour conditions.

The tempo of the agrarian struggles is so sweeping and big that the Congress ministries themselves are forced to come out with what they call antilandlord bills. They themselves have to take up the slogan of abolition of landlordism because the bourgeoisie perceives that the peasantry can no longer be cheated except by talking about abolition

of landlordism. We should not allow ourselves to be deceived by its legislation and must expose its real class character and show that the abolition of landlordism *that they promise is fake and not real. In fact today bowing down to the opposition of the landlords the Congress leaders and ministries are holding the so-called antilandlord bills in abeyance, so as to settle the question of proper compensation in the name of uniformity.*

The proposed bills, in the first place, give compensation to the landlords, which we must oppose and fight. They do not take over the land monopolised by the landlords, and so do not provide for redistribution of land to the tillers. Sharecroppers, tenants-at-will and other tillers, who constitute the majority of the peasant population, will not gain any right on land. The proposed bills will simply acquire with compensation only that portion of the landlords' property which has been let out on a rent-basis to tenants with occupancy rights. These measures will not abolish landlordism but retain it in a different form. Only a new load of compensation will be thrust upon the over-taxed and impoverished people for the benefit of the landlords.

For the purpose of consolidating landlordism in a new way certain provincial governments have produced new plans which indicate which way the wind is blowing. In these new plans (the Bengal plan, for example) it is proposed that all agricultural land in different areas will be possessed collectively by cooperatives of landlords and peasants, and the compensation money given to landlords will be invested as capital in the cooperatives. Naturally in such so-called cooperatives the rich landlords, owning the major share, will be in a position to control the entire land and the crops.

the new legislative measures are adopted, the  
 evicting peasants from their possessions on  
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 of the evicted peasants. As a result the  
 s of landlords are growing, monopoly

holdings of land are increasing, and the tillers of the soil are being expropriated on a very large scale. The new agrarian measures will do nothing but legalise this expropriation.

To boost these measures as advances or progressive steps is to cheat the peasants and shield the bourgeois leaders.

We must expose and unmask the proposed bills as measures to rehabilitate landlordism, measures that will further impoverish the mass of tillers of the soil and thereby further intensify the food crisis. They will strengthen the hold of monopoly in food, and thereby extend the black-market. We must oppose compensation being given to landlords, and demand that instead of giving compensation to landlords, the state must provide for manure, irrigation, reclamation of fallow land and supply cattle, seeds and modern implements to the peasants. Land must be given to the tillers of the soil, private land belonging to landlords being expropriated without compensation. The poorer sections of landlords are to be given a moderate allowance for a certain period, or allowed to retain private land sufficient for their maintenance.

The agrarian movement against feudal relations is not complete unless land is secured for the tiller. The peasantry, in order to secure land, must develop a coordinated movement round that slogan—a movement emerging from the partial movements for reduction of rent, debt, etc.

We should unhesitatingly lead the fight against the food famine created by the government's policy, and demand that the stocks of the big traders and landlords be confiscated for distributing food to the people. In the backward areas we should demand abolition of serfdom, forced labour, illegal cesses as in the case of Warlis and Halis, and take the struggle forward to the central slogan of "Land to the Tiller". In the states also the peasant must be roused to demand complete abolition of jagirdari and landlordism, of all feudal relations, and land to the tiller.

The economic crisis, which will smite the agrarian areas most ruthlessly, will set in motion colossal forces. These agrarian movements, uniting the entire mass of the poor peasants, middle peasants and the agrarian proletarians, will serve to bring about an alliance between the workers and the peasants which is the crux of any successful democratic movement. They are a part of the movement for the democratic front against the imperialist-bourgeois combine.

To head these agrarian struggles and unify them into one single stream of agrarian resistance, centring round the slogan of "Land to the Tiller", the All-India Kisan Sabha must be built up as the fighting central organisation of India's peasantry.

### *Tasks on the Student Front*

In the postwar revolutionary upsurge the student movement has played an important and significant role. The clashes between student demonstrators and the police and military in the demonstrations for the release of the INA prisoners, which roused whole cities to action, ended the wartime political lull and heralded the postwar upsurge. Mass solidarity actions of militant students during workingclass strikes in the postwar period have been a new feature, raising the student movement in India to a higher level.

Although the illusion that freedom has been won gripped the students after 15 August 1947, there has been a quick revival of the student movement. The enhancement of fees (with the consequent restriction of education) has provoked angry demonstrations in many provinces. Brutal repression by the ministries on student demonstrations against the fee-increase and in observance of political anti-imperialist anniversaries has led to direct clashes between students and the government, developing into a general struggle of the people for civil liberties.

With rapidly worsening economic conditions and growing political disillusionment with the Congress leadership, the perspective is one of developing struggles on the question of fees and other educational demands, solidarity actions with workingclass and kisan struggles and political action on the issue of civil liberties, the democratic struggles in the states, etc.

Aware of the menace from the student movement to the rule of reaction, the government is launching brutal repression to 'quell student revolts', to crush the spirit of the students.

Congress leaders have also started propaganda for the liquidation of the student movement as a fighting force, for the dissolution of militant student organisations and for setting up a government-sponsored nonpolitical students' organisation devoted to 'constructive work'.

The leadership of the Socialist Party lends support to this attack on the student movement by declaring that there is no need for a militant student movement and militant students' action. It therefore demands the dissolution of the militant student organisations, supports the setting up of a common nonpolitical organisation, and is concentrating only on recruiting students to the Socialist Party. The Socialist Party is thus ranged with those forces which seek to liquidate the student movement and disband its militant organisations.

Under such circumstances any tendency which ignores or underestimates the importance of the student movement, its revolutionary potentialities in the struggle for real independence, democracy and socialism, is disastrous and must be rooted out of the party ranks. Such a tendency only plays into the hands of the liquidators of the student movement.

Similarly any tendency which, in the name of 'maintaining the unity of the student movement' and in an imaginary fear of 'isolation', seeks to restrict the student movement to fighting for student demands, shirks the task of

organising mass solidarity actions with workingclass and kisan struggles, must also be sternly combated as a non-Marxist antiworkingclass tendency, which also would cripple the militant student movement.

The communist students must boldly seize the initiative and, through effective leadership of the developing mass struggles and a firm ideological struggle, bring about a reorientation of the entire student movement so that a fighting alliance of the student movement is forged with the working class and toiling masses, and the student movement as a whole comes to accept the ideology, programme and leadership of the working class in the fight for real independence, democracy and socialism. In this way they must defend the militant student movement from all bourgeois attacks and rally the fighting students in a common fighting organisation.

### *Tasks Among the Youth*

The toiling youth, drawn from the working class, the peasantry and the lower-middle class, has a special role to play in the present stage of the revolutionary struggle.

The workingclass and kisan youth have always played a significant role in class battles, in the trade-union and kisan struggles and in the national movement. The lower-middleclass youth have played an important role in periods of national upsurge. In the postwar revolutionary upsurge they have been the moving spirit in the strike-struggles of the clerks and middleclass employees. The youth from these sections have played the role of the advanceguard in the militant battles of the postwar period, in which barricades were thrown up and whole cities went into action against imperialism.

With deepening economic crisis, heightened economic exploitation of the masses, the imposition of crushing burdens on the toilers of town and country—the perspective is one of ever-larger masses of young workers, kisans and young employees and unemployed middleclass youth

being thrown into the arena of struggle. Political disillusionment with the Congress leadership is spreading with utmost rapidity among the exploited, disaffected, toiling youth.

Failure to marshal the forces of youth in a powerful democratic movement under proletarian leadership, failure to take communism directly to the toiling youth, however, is misdirecting the masses of disillusioned middle class (and even sections of workingclass and kisan youth) into reactionary communal volunteer organisations or to various youth organisations which are being developed into disruptive, antidemocratic and antiworkingclass organisations, tools in the hands of the exploiting classes.

The Communist Party must therefore make special efforts to win over the toiling youth to the ideology and programme of communism, combating bourgeois, anti-workingclass and antidemocratic trends among the youth. It must address itself to the task of developing a strong democratic movement of youth toilers for the fulfilment of the special aspirations of toiling youth in the field of labour and culture, fighting for the specific demands of the youth of the working class, the peasantry and the lower-middle class, and drawing the toiling youth into the struggle for real independence, democracy and socialism as a powerful organised force.

### *Tasks on the Women's Front*

Growing evidence of a new awakening amongst women and their remarkable fighting capacity and courage even in the face of the most terrible repression has been a new feature during the last few years. This has been shown by the Indian peasant and workingclass women as well as the lower-middleclass women—the wives and mothers of the workers, clerks and toiling sections of the people. Linked with them, the employed women—the teacher, the nurse, the telephonist and the clerk—have come forward to participate in the battles of their class, and through these have



shown the tremendous fighting qualities of women. The heroic part played by the peasant women in the great struggles of tebhaga and Telangana, the fight of the primary school-teachers, small strike battles of nurses, the participation of women telephonists in the great postal strike, the firm and glorious part played by women workers (e.g. Basanti Cotton Mills, Bata, pottery women workers of Calcutta, the textile women workers in Coimbatore, Madura and Bombay) in the long-drawn-out and fierce strike battles of recent times, and food demonstrations of lower-middleclass women are pointers to the fact that the tremendous hardships of the war years and after, the rising cost of living, the low wages, have brought to even the most backward section of our people—the women—a new consciousness and a new fighting quality.

But the conscious efforts of the women's front during these years have remained strictly confined to the middle-class housewives, and even for this section a fighting programme for food, cloth, housing was never effectively worked out, with the result that no movement worth the name developed under the guidance and inspiration of women's organisations or the women's front.

Today with the growing economic crisis the threats of retrenchments and dismissals, the high prices of essential commodities, the central tasks of the women's front must be to establish close contact with, and to unify, organise and stir into action the toiling masses of women—the working class, the peasant, the employed women and the wives of workers and of the lower-middleclass employees, struggling sections of the population, whose sufferings in the coming period will continuously increase to a breaking point.

For this the entire demands of the democratic programme must be put before them and explained to them. On the one hand, the democratic rights of all workers for work, a living wage, better conditions of life, and of the peasants for land, must also be taken up by all sections of the toiling women in common with their menfolk. On

the other hand, the women's fight against unjust social prejudices and oppression, their ignorance, superstition, and unequal position in society must form a powerful part of the democratic fight of mothers of all classes, to ensure a better future for their children; this will draw in women from all classes, including the middle class.

The organisational task of the women's front must be to bring increasing numbers of kisan and women workers into the kisan sabhas and trade unions, to take an increasing part in the campaigns and battles of their class. Together with that, the associations of middleclass employees like teachers, nurses, etc., where they exist, must see more active participation of women employees in the fight for their legitimate rights; and where such organisations do not exist, they should be rapidly built up.

The peasant women constitute the dominant section of oppressed womenfolk of India: that is why there must be consistent effort to draw them into struggles of their class as well as to take up their own special demands.

The party must pay also the greatest attention towards the mobilisation and activation of the lower-middleclass housewives, especially the wife of the worker, the clerk, the petty artisan, the foreman, the fitter, the small shopkeeper and the teacher. It is these toiling hard-hit women who must be brought into the various women's organisations to implement and fight for their democratic rights. In the coming months the consciousness of these sections of women will be raised to a higher level with the oncoming and increasing strike battles of their menfolk. It will be the revolutionary task of the women's front to consolidate this new consciousness and unite the fight of all sections of women for a better and a more progressive way of life. Only thus can a real powerful and democratic women's movement be built up which will bring in half the population of the country—the women—to play a powerful and decisive role in the establishment of a people's democratic state.

***Tasks on the States' People's Front***

The states, with their rotten autocratic and feudal structure and the long-oppressed masses awakening to struggle, constitute the weakest link in the collapsing imperialist-feudal structure.

The lack of any democratic rights, of any democratic and parliamentary institutions, the retention of the most backward feudal privileges and relations, jagirdari, land-lordism, with the feudal elements monopolising high governmental posts—all these, backed by the personal autocratic rule of the feudal princes, make the Indian states extremely vulnerable to the popular movement.

The feudal princes and their supporters never had any social mass basis. Their domains were bound to start shaking the moment the people woke up. Today these interests are attempting to seek a base for themselves by encouraging Hindu communalists, the RSS and other counterrevolutionary organisations, and by encouraging the massacres of Muslims to divert attention from the struggle against autocracy.

Nonetheless the states continue to be the weakest link in the imperialist chain. The suppression of the press, of democratic and civil liberties, the oppression of the peasants, the middle class, etc. under the autocratic rule of the princes, and the sham reforms which do not solve a single problem unite the entire people against autocracy.

The recent agreements between the praja mandals and some of the princes constitute a new attempt to stabilise old regimes with the aid of popular bourgeois leaders. But this attempt will also fail, since the new reforms cannot deceive the people for long, especially as the prajamandal leaders themselves have not the same prestige as the national leaders of the Congress have in India to hold back the masses for any length of time from joining the movement to end autocracy.

The perspective on the states' people's front should not be one of winning halfway house responsible governments

based on compromise with autocracy but one of ending autocracy and carrying forward the democratic movement. The former is the reformist perspective which has led us to trail behind the present reformist prajamandal leaders instead of isolating them and developing decisive movements through independent initiative.

The mighty sweep of the states' people's struggles is seen in some of the biggest actions that have been launched in the recent years, like the struggle of the Kashmiri people and now of the Hyderabad people or of the Travancore people. These struggles, though conducted by reformist leaderships, develop into militant actions frightening the autocracy and making it plain that, led properly, they are invincible against the weight of autocracy which has become unbearable for the masses.

This is borne out by the struggle in Hyderabad, where, under the leadership of the communists and the Andhra Mahasabha, the struggle of the Telangana people has reached an unprecedentedly high level. Braving the terror unleashed by the nizam's army and police and the fascist Majlis-e-Ittehad-ul-Muslimeen the people of Telangana have liberated over 2000 villages and are conducting a bitter struggle for land, for freedom and for democracy. Thereby they have demonstrated how the struggle can grow and develop when the basic issue of land to the tiller is made an integral part of the democratic struggle, when the issue of abolition of autocracy and power for the people is placed in the forefront, when the masses are led by fighting organisations and are free from the paralysing influence of the bourgeoisie.

But in the majority of states the struggles were conducted by the reformist leaderships of praja mandals or the state congresses. Supported by leaders of the national government, they used the people as pawns in the ignoble game of compromise. They restrained the people and made them look to the central government at whose bidding the movements were called off the moment the ground had been prepared for compromise.

The national leaders, intent on compromising within the framework of the Mountbatten plan, only concentrated on getting the states to accede to the Indian union, and paraded it as a big triumph. In fact in some states, the rulers put up a mock resistance to accession so that the whole struggle could be developed on that issue and the people kept away from a successful struggle for democracy and for the end of autocracy.

In fact accession, petty reforms, merger schemes, the formation of unions of states, all these are calculated to achieve the same basic objective of destroying the revolutionary movement in the states, of preserving autocracy and reinforcing it by means of an alliance with the bourgeoisie, of getting rid of the economic barriers that prevent the full exploitation of the markets and resources of the states by the bourgeoisie in cooperation with the princes.

Accession is not merely a device to sidetrack the attention of the people from the struggle for abolition of autocracy and agrarian reforms. It is also, as has been proved in Tehri, a weapon to protect the princes and buttress their collapsing regimes against the democratic struggles of the people. This must be recognised and exposed.

The much-boasted scheme of merger of the states with the neighbouring provinces protects the petty princes against popular revolt and enables them to retain their jagirs, their income from extensive private lands and their feudal privileges. The corrupt state bureaucracy is bodily incorporated in the provincial administration, giving no relief whatsoever to the common people.

Where several states are grouped together to form a union, as in Kathiawar and Central India, a counterrevolutionary alliance is established against the people, and new and extensive powers are conferred on the so-called raj pramukhs, so as to enable them to erect effective barriers against the mounting tide of democratic struggles and preserve the states as backwaters of reaction.

Out of all this have emerged only some reforms in which

the weak bourgeois element in the states shares power with autocracy, and is not even the senior partner but a junior partner. These compromises have been of such a thinly-veiled character that as soon as the mass pressure declines, there is every danger that the most reactionary elements in the states will come on top.

In fact in many states the feudal princes, the landlords and the jagirdars are using the RSS, the Hindu Mahasabha and the communal elements to organise intimidation and goondaism against the states' people's movements and to see that further demands for democracy are stopped.

All the princes are organising a hunt of the Muslim minority to rouse communal passions, to give a mass basis to the Hindu Mahasabha, to expel the Muslims into Indian territory and there create problems for the Indian union administration. Thus those whom the national government is allying itself with are openly organising this counter-attack against it.

The extremely weak and compromising bourgeois leadership in the states is afraid of extending the struggle to the peasants and the workers by adopting an agrarian and industrial programme. Only when the struggle lasts for some time, does it get spontaneously extended to the masses, but it is withdrawn when the masses enter the arena. This weakness is fully exploited by the states' authorities to drive as petty a compromise as possible and to counterattack the reformist struggles with communal attacks.

In these circumstances it is essential to expose fully the agreements as sellouts organised by the prajamandal leaderships in collaboration with the national-bourgeois leadership.

To believe that the type of responsible government which has been ushered into the states constitutes an advance, is to ignore the revolutionary strength of the people and the character of the compromise.

It is therefore wrong not to popularise the demand for the abolition of autocracy, and to accept and be content

with the reformist demand for responsible government. It is wrong to start with the programme of compromise and not even raise the demand of the abolition of autocracy.

Equally, the excuse of organisational weakness of the progressive forces must never be advanced to shield a lineup behind the compromisers, to glorify the compromise and thus win 'popularity'.

For organisational weakness can never be a reason to abandon a basic slogan such as the abolition of autocracy. If in advancing such basic and correct slogans the compromisers attack us and we temporarily suffer isolation, we have to face them boldly and not retreat. The party has grown by putting forward its programme boldly, by independently acting and by participating in the common struggle. And it would be totally wrong to give up the right of independent criticism and attack against those who betray the people, to give up the duty of rousing the radical sections of the states' people to independent thinking, to give up the right to educate the masses about their fundamental right to abolish feudal rule.

We must therefore resolutely support the movement of the states' people for liberation and democracy. While participating in the struggles launched by the reformist leadership, we should not forget our basic slogans and the fact that the people themselves are demanding an end to the feudal rule. Participating in the common struggle, fighting resolutely against compromises and working to make the struggle all-embracing so that it reaches its basic objective—these are our tasks.

Our decisive participation in the states' people's struggles, our clear programme and sharp criticism of the compromising leadership, will rapidly rally round us the militant elements in the states' people's struggles, as the working class in many states has already rallied round us, and become a lever for building an alliance between the advanceguard and the states' people—an alliance for the achievement of complete democracy. The alliance will be

defeated if the working class hesitates, does not show a militant way out of the situation and succumbs to the compromisers. Any weakness on the states' people's front will lead to the disruption of the democratic front.

### *The Untouchables*

Forming the most exploited and oppressed section of our people, the six crores of untouchables are a powerful reserve in the struggle for democratic revolution. The Congress, led mainly by bourgeois leaders belonging to upper castes, has consistently refused to champion the cause of the untouchable masses and to integrate the struggle for social and economic emancipation of the untouchables with the general struggle for national freedom. This enabled the reformist and separatist leaders like Dr Ambedkar to keep the untouchable masses away from the general democratic movement and to foster the illusion that the lot of untouchables could be improved by reliance on imperialism.

The utter bankruptcy of this policy is proved by the fact that while the top leaders of the untouchables, like Dr Ambedkar and Mandal, have become ministers and thus have lined up with the ruling sections in Indian union and Pakistan, the trusting untouchable masses continue to suffer social degradation and economic exploitation as before. As for the bourgeois leaderships of the Indian union and Pakistan, they have done nothing for the untouchables except promising them formal equality of status.

The untouchables therefore have been betrayed by the Congress as well as by their own leaders. Their emancipation, it has been proved by events, can be achieved neither by reliance on imperialism nor on the bourgeoisie, but only through a united struggle of the entire toiling people against all exploitation.

In recent years the untouchables, both in cities and in villages, have waged big battles against social discrimination and against worsening conditions of life. Under the



impact of the crisis the untouchable workers in Bombay, Nagpur and other centres are being drawn into the common struggle of workers and are joining the trade unions in increasing numbers. Political consciousness is fast growing among them.

To quicken this process, to draw the untouchable masses into the democratic front, to break down the caste prejudices of the uppercaste workers and peasants, to unite the common people of all castes against their common enemy—such are the tasks facing the party. This task will have to be carried out by a relentless struggle against the bourgeoisie of the upper castes as well as against the opportunist and separatist leaders of the untouchables themselves. We have to expose these leaders, tear away the untouchable masses from their influence, and convince them that their interest lies in joining hands with the other exploited sections and that only the victory of the democratic revolution will emancipate them from social degradation and slavery. Every discrimination against the untouchables must be denounced as a bourgeois attempt to keep the masses disunited, and every just demand of theirs must be fought for as a part of the common struggle for people's rights.

### *The Minorities*

The democratic front will be repeatedly disrupted if the working class and its party are not able to defeat the minority-baiters and solve the problem of protecting the minorities. In Indian union Muslim minority is being hunted and attacked by Hindu communalism.

The problem of minorities is of vital importance in the class battles of the working class and the battle for a democratic state. The hunt of the Muslims is not a religious or communal hunt but an attack of the counterrevolutionary forces to disrupt the forces of the democratic revolution by involving them in an internecine war. The counterrevolutionaries realise that the common movement of the working class and the peasantry has assumed such threatening

proportions that unless it is directed into fratricidal channels it cannot be defeated.

Knowing this, the working class and the Communist Party must take a firm stand against the communalists from both sides, the Hindu and Muslim communalists, fight riots and make the struggle for the rights of the minorities a part of its own struggle for political and economic emancipation. Unless the working class and its party are able to inspire other classes with a powerful urge to protect the rights of the minorities, their right to exist, of culture, language, no discrimination in government services, etc. and the right of religious worship as part of the democratic struggle of the entire people, the compromisers cannot be defeated and the democratic struggle cannot triumph.

The working class must therefore actively work for the protection of minority rights and fight against communal agencies like the Hindu Mahasabha, the Muslim League and the RSS, and also communal policies of the Congress leaders and national government ministers like Sardar Patel.

### *The War Danger*

It is the design of imperialism that India and Pakistan remain in a state of permanent hostility, so that at the least sign of a revolutionary upheaval in either, both can be sidetracked into a war to drown the revolution and in the end both can be kept under complete control. Some leaders of the central as well as provincial governments also indulge in warmongering in order to sidetrack the attention of the people from the struggle against their own oppressors and to divert the rising discontent of the masses into channels of hatred against Pakistan.

We must fight against this war propaganda and assert the integrity and unity of the struggles of the oppressed in both states, and pledge to help each other by maintaining friendly relations and carrying on the fight against our oppressors and exploiters, and by fighting the common enemy, British imperialism.

Unless great vigilance is exercised by the working class and its party, they may find themselves dragged behind the bourgeoisie in the imperialist game of war between the two states. Today threats of war, etc. are no doubt part of pressure politics and are meant to key up popular support behind the governments. But, at the same time, real issues of conflict, like that of Kashmir, are arising. These issues, manipulated by imperialism, may any day lead to what may virtually amount to war.

The working class must take a clear attitude on this question. The fight over the states bordering on the two dominions has become a question of pure grabbing of territory without any progressive content on either side. The working class on either side cannot support this lust for territory—of both dominions—neither of whom genuinely accepts either the right of selfdetermination or the freedom of the peasants and the people from feudal rule.

In the event of a conflict arising on this or any other issue, the working class and the people must assert the unity of the democratic movements on both sides and declare that the interests of the working class and the common man lie in fighting imperialism and their common oppressors, the landlords and the capitalists, and not in fighting each other at their dictates. The latter course would only perpetuate imperialist-feudal-bourgeois bondage. In fact the conflict will be engineered precisely to defeat the common democratic movement in both territories.

The conspiracy of the communalists from both sides will lead to more and more riots, since they are required by the counterrevolutionaries to stop the march of the people. In every province, in every town, riots will have to be fought ruthlessly by forging the common bond and exposing the common enemies. The common bond forged in the class struggles, in the workingclass and kisan struggles, in the trade unions and kisan sabhas, will become stronger and stronger the more the party succeeds in leading the partial battles and showing the solidarity of the oppressed.

### *Fight for Selfdetermination*

The Congress leadership by its compromising policy and its hostility to the right of selfdetermination has brought about a disastrous partition of the country. Today, in the Indian union, it is again committing the same crime in the interests of the dominating bourgeoisie by refusing self-determination to national units like Maharashtra, Kerala, Tamilnadu, etc.

Such a refusal is bound to lead to hostile sentiments among the different nationalities of the Indian union and create the danger of exploitation of their discontent by reactionary elements. In the interests of advancing the democratic movement, the party must support the right of all nationalities to selfdetermination and demand that it be made a part of the constitution. Unless the party takes a lead in this, the communal reactionaries are likely to run away with it.

### *Foreign Policy*

The Indian bourgeoisie, allied to imperialism for crushing the Indian revolution, eager to secure economic and military assistance from US and British imperialism, anxious to enter the markets of the Indian Ocean region by the grace of Anglo-American imperialists, is emerging increasingly as a party to imperialist plans for crushing the revolution in these countries.

In view of the strong sympathies of the Indian masses with the camp of democracy and socialism, with the cause of Indonesia and Vietnam, the Congress leadership hides its subservience to the Anglo-American bloc in world politics under the cover of 'neutrality' between opposing camps, of frank opportunism to realise Indian bourgeois interests.

The Communist Party must boldly declare that there can be no neutrality in the world struggle between the forces of imperialism and the forces of democracy, independence and socialism—any more than there can be such neutrality in the struggle of the exploiters and the exploited inside India.

Recognising the strong popular feelings against imperialism, the party must ruthlessly unmask every betrayal by the Indian government in the field of foreign policy. It must seek every opportunity to mobilise popular masses in support of the democratic cause in every country.

It must combat the poisonous anti-Soviet propaganda that is disseminated by bourgeois politicians and also by the socialist leaders, and popularise the role of the Soviet Union as the leader of humanity in the struggle for independence, democracy, socialism and a lasting peace.

It must popularise the glorious achievements of the Chinese revolution, underlining its international significance—particularly its significance for the peoples of Asia.

It must make special efforts to frustrate the political and military measures of imperialism to crush the revolutions in Indonesia and Vietnam, by means of ceaseless propaganda and mass solidarity actions.

It must conduct a merciless campaign of exposure against the plans being hatched for a southeast Asia 'defence bloc' under the leadership of the British, French and Dutch imperialists, with India playing a principal role, which is designed to be the finishing touch to imperialist plans for the reconquest of this region.

### *Lead the Masses*

Disillusionment against the policies of the national leadership is rapidly growing among the people. These policies will not solve a single problem of the people. There is no scope for industrial development of India on capitalist lines—beyond the colonial order and status. These policies will add to the misery and impoverishment of the Indian masses.

Struggles—partial, economic and political—against this impoverishment have a profound revolutionary meaning in the context of the maturing of the democratic movement in our country. The party must work its utmost to win the maximum possible public support for every one of

these struggles, with the knowledge that with the worsening crisis affecting every section of the common people it will be possible to nail down the vested interests as the chief enemy of our economic life.

The imperialists and their agents seek to build a line-up from the British and American imperialists to the bourgeoisie in order to stop the tide of the revolution. They hope that the bourgeoisie will succeed in splitting the popular forces, paralysing large sections of the masses and repressing the rest. Their own agents have already started this process through riots.

At this stage the fate of the democratic movement depends on the correct policy of the Communist Party and of the working class—a policy which must see the great strength of the forces of democracy and also their weakness in the illusions that the masses have about the bourgeoisie. To gather that strength through the democratic front, to dispel the illusions by unmasking the collaborators and to carry forward the fight on the basis of the programme of the democratic movement—these are the special tasks of the party of the working class.

The Communist Party, by exposing the national-bourgeois leadership will accelerate the process of disillusionment of thousands, enabling the democratic front to grow and develop sufficient strength to defeat the bourgeois policies and create the preconditions for the establishment of a democratic state, which will really be an instrument for implementing the full programme of the democratic movement and for simultaneously passing on to socialist construction, without an intermediary stage to capitalism.

In the present period of world crisis the task of pushing the democratic movement ahead is the responsibility of the working class and its party, the Communist Party. The independent role and activity of the working class, as the champion of the anti-imperialist masses against the imperialist-feudal combine and against the collaborationist bourgeoisie, constitute the guarantee for the success of the democratic movement.

The working class cannot play this role unless it itself is growingly united under its vanguard, the Communist Party, and unless the party is able to unite the people in the democratic front, and activise broad masses in the cause of achieving real people's democracy.

It is therefore more than ever necessary to broaden the mass base of the party among workers, peasants, middle class, students, youths of all sections, women, and the oppressed minorities, so that the party of the working class becomes a real mass party capable of discharging the great responsibilities resting on its shoulders.

It is necessary to attract fighters from all fronts and all sections, militants from partial struggles and all honest revolutionaries to the ranks of the party, to educate them in Marxism-Leninism, so that they in their turn become the real educators of the masses guiding and leading them towards complete freedom, democracy and socialism.

Particular emphasis must be placed on recruiting militants from the working class into the party and on educating and promoting to responsible positions of leadership the rising worker-cadres in the party, thus strengthening the proletarian element in our party, in our leadership; it must be clearly understood that only a conscious effort in this direction, particularly in educating such cadres in the teachings of Marxism-Leninism, and in their application to the problems of the Indian revolution, can ensure the development of a strong disciplined mass communist party. Towards a mass communist party with a conscious membership, fully trained in Marxism-Leninism—such must be our watchword.

## **II**

### **Report on Reformist Deviation**

The draft political thesis endeavours to make a sharp break with the past reformist understanding of the political situation. In deciding our line of action in India, our immediate slogans and attitude to other parties, we are taking a stand on the basis of international situation, the general crisis of capitalism, its special features in India and the role of classes in the new situation. We are again basing ourselves on a concrete study of the correlation of class forces in the country—the only way for Marxists to judge a situation.

The draft does not explain however how we came to accept the Mountbatten resolution, why we failed to apply class analysis in the war and in the recent postwar period. Nor does it throw any light on our understanding of the situation in the war period.

The purpose of the present document is to study the mistakes of the preceding period which landed us in the worst form of reformism with the Mountbatten resolution. Its purpose is to lay bare those deviations in our line which from time to time made us stray from the revolutionary path and landed us in opportunist deviations.

Party members, district leaders and even provincial leaders had often felt that there was something wrong in many aspects of the party line and they were not always able to reconcile the central committee's resolutions with the reality of the situation. A review of our past together with the new political resolution should serve to unify

Presented by B. T. Ranadive to the second congress.



our party to discharge its revolutionary responsibilities in the immediate future.

The oscillations in party line in the postwar period which in the course of nine months swung from the August resolution to the Mountbatten resolution were the direct result of a faulty and reformist understanding of the war period itself. It is necessary therefore to go to the root cause of the mistakes and find out where we erred because our postwar mistakes followed directly from the mistakes of the war period.

These mistakes are of a very serious type, and therefore ought to be studied and mastered by everybody. It is obvious that in this document we cannot deal in detail with them but we can only point out the major trends that were revealed through them.

To begin with, with the transformation of the imperialist war into people's war, everyone knows that the leadership of the party for six long months refused to recognise the changed character of the war and pursued a policy of bourgeois nationalism and trailed behind the national bourgeois leadership of the country. Long before this, for years, the Communist International had given repeated warnings and guidance about the duties of the world working class in the event of a war against the Soviet Union. In the discussions of the seventh congress itself, the defence of the Soviet Union was recognised to be a condition binding on all honest socialists to whichever party they belonged and was considered to be the elementary duty laid down by proletarian internationalism and by the demands of the world liberation struggle.

In spite of this, the leadership of the party behaved exactly as social-democrats behaved in the first world war and for six long months trailed behind the national bourgeoisie, opposing war and making the party toe a line which was antiworkingclass, anti-Soviet, anti-Marxist.

Therefore on the most crucial question of workingclass politics and the international workingclass movement, on the question of defence of the Soviet Union, on the question

of antifascist war, the leaders landed themselves in the camp of opponents of antifascist war and betrayers of the workingclass movement.

Once again the deviation was to sacrifice the independent revolutionary activity and principles of the working class, for currying favour with the national bourgeoisie in the name of fighting sectarianism, preventing isolation.

The line of the party was changed only after certain party comrades who were in jail at that time had repeatedly written to the party centre demanding a change in the line and had sent a number of documents explaining why the line should be changed. These documents named "jail documents" were the first consistent attempt to understand the changed character of the war on the basis of the international duty of the working class and the unity of the world struggle for socialism and the colonial struggle for freedom.

These documents themselves contained a number of wrong formulations which were not only open to charges of royism but were themselves royist formulations. For instance, such formulations as united front with imperialism, national oppressor being an ally, etc. were nothing but royist formulations which would have logically led to royist practice.

But the great merit of the jail documents was that they correctly understood the changed character of the war and the international implications of the war and its significance, sharply attacked the stand of the national bourgeoisie and did not allow us to be swerved from the path of proletarian duty by fake considerations of isolation and sectarianism to hide our trailing behind the bourgeoisie and even when they made some very wrong formulations, they advocated a practice which was one of support to struggle against imperialism while supporting war at the same time. For instance, they stated that "the working class must create a serious situation for the government" and asked the party "not to hesitate to engage itself in

skirmishes with the government which seem to be looming ahead. It is in the course of discharging these tasks that the proletariat will have to wage political warfare against the government..."

They further asked the working class and the party to have a path independent both of imperialism and the bourgeoisie. Characteristic is their attitude towards national government.

"Such a government (national government) will no doubt enable us to organise the war effort better... but remember, at the same time, the other side of the picture. It will be after all a government of compromise between imperialism and the bourgeoisie. When it helps the war, it will do so in a thoroughgoing bourgeois fashion, accepting all the imperialist arguments and salting them with nationalist phrases, delusions and dreams... It will not hesitate to sell Russia or other revolutions when Britain finds it necessary and is prepared to offer them a handsome bribe."

And lastly the documents did not promise automatic freedom after the military defeat of fascism. On the other hand, they took a sober view of the international situation and saw that the military defeat of fascism would unleash a new wave of revolutions and not cause the automatic collapse of world imperialism.

"Only a swift defeat of Hitler can ensure for the European proletarians the armed support of the Soviet Union for the developing revolutionary wave. Such a defeat can throw the entire world imperialist system out of gear, enabling the colonial masses to raise their standard of revolt."

These documents advocated partial struggles in defence of the workingclass and peasant interests, political and economic struggles, to establish national government. Yet there was no illusion about the national government itself, no illusion that imperialism would automatically collapse. They thus understood the strength of imperialism correctly and sought to strike a path independent of the national

bourgeoisie and imperialism. The actual line of action that was suggested was no doubt contrary to some of the generalisations that they made, generalisations like united front with imperialism, etc.

Had the right-reformist deviation not been dominant among the party leaders, it would have utilised the strong points of the jail documents to arrive at a correct line and understand the real transformation that had taken place in the character of the war. It would have laid stress on the correct points which the jail documents were making for striking a path independent of the bourgeoisie and imperialism. Unfortunately the leaders failed to learn anything from their own mistakes or what was wrong in the jail documents. They formally accepted the changed character of the war but then made a slashing attack on the jail documents and instead of rejecting certain very wrong formulations in the documents and strengthening the correct ones, they denounced the documents, rejected correct formulations and themselves worked on the basis of the incorrect formulations which they sought to attack.

All this is abundantly seen in the booklet *Forward to Freedom* which was accepted by the entire party leadership and the entire party as a convincing book explaining popularly the changed character of the war and the tasks of the party. In reality *Forward to Freedom* clearly shows that the party leaders had accepted people's war only formally and was yet trailing behind the national bourgeoisie and through the line given in the booklet, it had started trailing behind imperialism also.

For what was the gist of this booklet? Instead of the sober estimate of the international situation which would have made the author understand that the defeat of fascism would lead to a tremendous weakening of the world imperialism and unleashing of revolutionary wave, the author holds out a rosy picture of the automatic liberation of India and the world with the mere military defeat of fascism. This was the stamp of bourgeois nationalism on the formal acceptance of the changed character of the war

for it was precisely the bourgeois nationalists who were raising the question why should they participate in the war unless they get freedom here and now. Here was the Communist Party promising them automatic freedom without struggle with the mere military collapse of fascism. To seduce the patriots into the camp of people's war such phrases as imperialism is a prisoner in the people's camp were coined, phrases which were extremely dangerous because they made the party blind to the treacherous and disruptive role which imperialism was playing in the course of the war.

"Hereto the imperialist rulers of the world have shaped the future history at the peace conferences. The peace conference is not yet in sight but it will be a peace conference the like of which the world has never known before. The Soviet government will act the leader of the peoples of the world to see that the end of the all-people's war is *all-people's peace, all-people's democracy, all-people's liberation and all-people's unity*. This is how the USSR will fulfil its role as the world liberator, for a new world order of peace, prosperity and freedom for all the peoples of the world."

In contrast therefore to the jail documents, *Forward to Freedom* promised automatic freedom and underestimated the role of imperialism and thereby prepared the way for abjuring struggle against imperialist policy in the name of fighting the people's war.

Secondly, *Forward to Freedom* did not in the least try to understand the selfish class policies of the national bourgeoisie but on the other hand did its best to tie the working class to the tail of the national bourgeoisie. The jail documents described the national government as a government of compromise about which we have to be cautious. But *Forward to Freedom* gets into ecstasies over this government and says:

"National India led by a national government will be smashing the imperialist fetters imposed on every department of our national life. In the very process of defend-

ing ourselves, we will be building our economy, we will be imparting national consciousness to 400 millions of our countrymen, we will be recruiting millions as soldiers, inspired as defenders of our country and fighters for freedom. National India with her own hands will be shattering the foundations of British India and creating those of people's India." Further, "India under a national government will take giant strides towards such a development of all her economic resources, the like of which we have not yet known. 400 millions to be fed and clothed, millions of Indian soldiers to be equipped and armed, everything done to clean out the fascist hordes from the near and far east, all-aid to China, all-aid to USSR, all-aid to every struggling people. This means an unprecedented economic development of all the resources of our country, every productive element in our national life doing its best to defend the country and aid the liberation not only of our country, not only of the whole east, but of the whole world."

In this rosy picture, the little fact that the national bourgeoisie will be controlling the national government, will be guided by its own selfish interests, is forgotten and national government is equated to national freedom. Once again both the role of imperialism and the role of the national bourgeoisie are done away with by sleight of hand and people are promised quick results.

Similarly in the same book Gandhism is only described as the path of negation and Gandhiji's role as a class-conscious bourgeois leader is not even mentioned. Same running thread is there in connection with the entire national leadership. The utterly selfish and compromising character of the national bourgeoisie now revealing itself as antifreedom and profascist is not mentioned. attacked and castigated. To what length this illusion about the bourgeoisie not only of our country but also of other countries had gone can be seen from what is written in the *preface* about Chiang Kai-shek:

"The fall of Singapore, the concern for the fate of Asia,

the imminent danger to India, brought Marshal Chiang on his urgent mission to India. He came to take national India into the people's war. He came to build the united front between the peoples of India and China as an integral part of the world antiaggression front. His visit was political intervention by the united national front of China for the liberation of India in the interests of the common anti-fascist war. Who would have dreamed when we sent our tiny medical mission to China that its fraternal return will be the visit of China's great leader to our land to help unshackle our proud nation from the hands of imperialist autocracy? His farewell message to the people of India means for the future of Asia what Stalin's July and November speeches mean for the future of the entire world."

Chiang, the murderer of Chinese workers, is as great a liberator as Stalin.

In short, illusions about imperialism, illusions about our own bourgeoisie and the murderous bourgeoisie of other countries, abjuration of struggle against imperialist policy and against the bourgeoisie and sweeping concessions to bourgeois-nationalist arguments about immediate freedom—such were the characteristic features of the line laid by *Forward to Freedom*.

No one in the party criticised the book but everyone praised it. Even the signatories of the jail documents did not have a word of criticism to say against the book and swallowed all that was written in it.

In the first meeting of the central committee in September 1942 every member who spoke started by paying a tribute to this booklet which everyone assured had opened their eyes and corrected the wrong perspective which was supposed to have been given by the jail documents. One could understand how deep down the mire of reformism everyone had gone since no one had reacted against this book.

The attack of the imperialist government against the National Congress and the arrests of Congress leaders on 9 August 1942 put our new line severely to test. It was no

doubt very creditable to us that in spite of the terrific attack against us and anger of the people all round, we stuck to our main line and did not become open victims of bourgeois nationalism. On the question of 9th August there was no wavering inside the central committee or inside the party and we decided to carry on our line despite the provocative tactics of the national bourgeoisie and the wanton repression of the people by imperialism. We absorbed the shock of attack from the bourgeoisie, their agents and the government, and steadfastly went on propagating for our line. Now under the double effect of repression and national anger the real implications of our line begin to emerge more and more.

Having separated ourselves from the 9th August struggle, we were more and more pushed into taking a non-struggle, nonclass approach on every vital question because of the basic defect in our line. For instance, on the question of strikes, *Forward to Freedom* does speak of the right to strike. It is emphasised again in the resolution on production passed by the 1942 September meeting of the central committee. But by the beginning of 1943, even before the party congress, the central committee actually rejects a draft mentioning the right to strike and conduct of strikes wherever necessary and comes to the conclusion that there should be no strikes. Similarly, in the name of concretely helping the people's war the main slogans of the agrarian front gradually begin to disappear from our platform, the demand for abolition of landlordism, for reduction of debts, rents, the actual struggle to conduct them, the struggle against forced collection of war levy—all these are more and more relegated to the background and their place is taken by the grow-more-food campaign, by concessions demanded to grow more food and so on.

On the trade-union front, we had secured some demands of workers in essential and vital industries because the government was afraid of stoppages but we imagined that we secured them without strike because our policy was for production and so on. We satisfied our anti-imperialist



conscience by raising the demand for the release of Congress leaders and thereby thought that we had sufficiently struggled against imperialist provocation. In actual fact we go on doing less and less struggle against imperialist policy since we had already regarded imperialism as a prisoner in people's camp.

Very eloquent was our understanding of the food crisis in 1943 and the remedies we suggested to solve it. The food crisis resolution passed by the central committee on 19 February 1943 nowhere mentions landlordism as one of the basic causes of the food crisis, and does not hold imperialist colonial system of destitution and slavery as the main source through which deterioration in the food situation had come. Having abjured struggle against imperialism on the food question, we also abjured it against imperialist policy in general but here we do it cleverly by telling the people that if people's unity is built to the maximum, the bureaucrats will necessarily yield. The theory about imperialism being prisoner in the people's camp is now repeatedly trotted out to show that the bureaucracy and imperialism are so weak that the moment people unite anywhere, they must yield like lambs. This was only a clever way of pushing forward the policy of no attack against bureaucracy and no attack against imperialism lest the fifth column takes advantage of it.

In fact it is at this time that the party leaders begin to warn against exposure of the bureaucracy and imperialist policy as a purely negative policy. The hunt for exposure deviation which means unmasking of imperialism now starts and the deviation to replace criticism and attack of imperialist policy by merely positive proposals now begins to grow. The line laid down in *Forward to Freedom* was logically leading us to this practice. For instance, in the February resolution of the central committee, while we failed to note the landlord, we say the following:

"In short, we failed to grasp that the food crisis was an extension of the national crisis to food and that the fight

for food was closely linked agitationally as well as organisationally with the fight against fifth column..." And again the resolution says: "Our agitation often tended to become merely denunciation of the bureaucracy and the hoarders."

Thus we will see that every kind of criticism, attack against imperialist policies, every demand for a fundamental solution of the problem was more and more opposed by us in the name of carrying forward the people's war. We were able to hide from ourselves this fact by exaggerating the role of the fifth column, by becoming panicky before it and by abjuring mass protests in the name of not giving an opportunity to the fifth column to exploit it. The strength of the fifth column was an invention of our imagination to justify abjuration of struggle against imperialist policy.

In the resolution passed by the (first) party congress (June 1943) these deviations found their culmination. For instance, resolution states:

"In the second phase, namely, that of building national unity in action, continuance of left-nationalist deviation is a far greater drag on progress. For instance, a food campaign which reduces itself to a mere exposure of the bureaucracy coupled with formulation of general demands, leads not to food but to riots. The point is to unite the people against riots and for positive tasks in connection with the solution of the local food problem. This enables us to force the bureaucracy to change or modify its measures and prevent riots. Not to do this is to open the door to food riots, to let in the fifth column."

Here the line is stated in its bluntest form. Fear of any kind of mass action, illusion that the bureaucracy will change its line and modify its measures, fear of exposing the bureaucracy, all are put forward in the sharpest possible manner. It is really a demand for constructive suggestions to imperialism and not 'destructive' criticism. And all these are put forward in the name of fighting the left-

nationalist deviation when actually right-reformist deviation was dominant inside the party.

Again the resolution states:

"All these deviations have one common root—namely, the failure to conduct a sharp struggle against the fifth column and its slogans, failure to expose the negative policy followed by the Congress leaders and tendency to overemphasise the 'exposure' and the wordy abuse of the bureaucracy."

Thus, once again, unmasking of imperialism is derided and prohibited by the party.

In the party congress resolution there is hardly any anti-imperialist slogan except the release of national leaders. For the rest, in a typically liberal fashion, the responsibility for securing partial demands, of avoiding food famine, everything in the world, is thrown on the unity of the people and an alibi is given to imperialism.

The main classes that keep the people in bondage, the classes that exploit them, the policies that these classes pursued, the treacherous role of imperialism—all these are absent from the document. The practice that naturally results from this is to offer collaboration and generally of supporting the workers' and peasants' economic struggles when they break out over our heads.

It is in this congress therefore that we come out sharply against strikes and the production report submitted by B. T. Ranadive denounces every strike as a political defeat of the working class. On the production front, we again raise illusions that by mobilising the people and mobilising the workers without strikes, we will not only be able to raise production but also secure workers' demands.

It was not wrong for us to have talked about production in general saying that the workers are interested in raising production for supporting war but our main battle for production could only be in the nature of unmasking the existing system of production. We should have recognised that without strike struggles the workingclass demands

could not be secured to any large extent and we should have continued the supple tactics of the earlier period when we said that we would only strike where we must to defend the workers' interests. We gave up this supple position and landed ourselves into a purely antistrike position which cost us in many cases the support of the growing workingclass movement. This whole illusory nōnclass, unrealistic outlook in production, the profuse promises given to the workers, was codified so to say in B. T. Rana-dive's book on production which was subsequently published.

The party letter dated 4 October 1943 shows the utter reformism that had developed on the peasant front after the party congress. Class collaboration, abjuration of the struggle of kisans against landlordism, praise of the zamindars and upper class, illusions about religious preachers, everything is seen in this letter. This letter on grow-more-food campaign is a review of the work since the party congress.

"They (achievements of the GMF campaign) are enough as pointers to show that if only we make a proper approach to them even the zamindars can be drawn into the movement."

And thus it talks about Malabar zamindars, the jenmis in the following manner:

"A new consciousness is in fact rising among the jenmis; and this is not confined to the jenmi youth. The jenmi representative on the central assembly is the president of the all-Malabar food committee. He expressed his sympathies with the Youth League; Narikkot Namboodiri, who gave 500 acres of land to kisan sabha was formerly a bitter opponent of the kisan sabha; the raja of Kattakkal (a 70-year-old man belonging to the Zamorin's family) is doing all he can to save people from cholera and starvation; and many more are likewise working shoulder to shoulder, with us in food and cholera relief committees.

"Why this change in their consciousness?

"Acute misery in the countryside, starvation leading to

cholera which took a toll of 25,000 victims in Malabar and would have killed more had it not been for the social service rendered by patriots. All this roused the social consciousness of the jenmis."

Thus the upper class moved sometimes by humanitarian motive is praised as showing a new social consciousness, a sign of communist inferiority before the upper class. Then later on the letter says:

"Every one of these organisations can and must be moved into action in our struggle against the hoarder, the profiteer and the fifth columnist. It has been proved by experience that even zamindars and moneylenders can be moved to participate in the campaign if proper approach is made."

This was said at a time when the zamindars and moneylenders were the biggest blackmarketeers. Further:

"Moulvis, missionaries, pandits, all dignitaries of any religion should be approached and requested to take part in the campaign. Explain to them persuasively and convince them that there can be no higher service of god today than rousing their followers to do their duty to their starving brethren."

And earlier it asks party leaders to tackle every question in the village, offer such solution as will be acceptable to every section of the people in the village, which of course includes the exploiting class. The rent dispute between the zamindars and tenants is also mentioned as a question on which solution should be found which is acceptable to both.

Due to our faulty understanding of the role of imperialism, the party came out with the most horrible formulations about the Socialist Party, the Forward Bloc and other left groups. They were denounced as fifth-column groups while in reality it was imperialism that was doing the work of the fifth column. While we kowtowed and bowed down before the national bourgeois leaders, while we ignored the existence of imperialism, we directed fire against these groups whose following was left-nationalist following and

whom later on we had certainly to win over. We even refused to note the fact that sabotage and other things were often the acts springing up out of the anti-imperialist indignation of the following of these groups. This characterisation of these parties as fifth column alienated the sympathy of many people and earned us the hostility of thousands. One of the reasons why the left following in the postwar period took initiative in launching anticommunist attack was our wrong attack against these parties.

The party congress resolution overestimated the danger of the fifth column and the most ridiculous formulations about its all-pervading influence were made and it was because of this that we landed ourselves into this wrong attack against these groups.

In the name of grow more food, abjuration of struggle against the imperialist land system, of the struggle against landlords; in the name of solving the food crisis, helping the iniquitous procurement plan of the government, at least not fighting it out; in the name of having a broad movement raising illusions that even the exploiting profiteering class will be in the movement, thus leading to class collaboration.

It was following this that we began to make basic distinctions between a good bureaucrat and bad bureaucrat and quote with pride concessions which we won in this or that district, to raise the illusion that under popular pressure all the bureaucrats can be put together to solve people's problems.

One may justifiably ask how is it that in spite of these deviations the party developed and went ahead. The answer is, immediately after the change of the line the party was really gathering the fruits of the earlier anti-imperialist battles that it led. Even in this period our close link with the masses forced us from time to time to take up issues which were agitating their minds, issues of their daily struggle and pushed us forward to defend their day-to-day interests. But there is no doubt that in the main the party was isolated and failed to grow after the end of 1943.

Certain amount of stagnation came because the masses could no longer see in the party the same fighting organisation that led the earlier battles.

These mistakes if they had been committed by any other party would have smashed that party out of existence. But because, in spite of these mistakes, sometimes even by violating the strict party line, the party members doggedly fought for the day-to-day demands, although in a reformist way, enabled the party to grow to some extent. But there is no doubt that had the party followed supple tactics of attacking when the war situation permitted it to attack, of fighting imperialism, of leading the battles of the masses—it would have grown tremendously and become a very big force.

These mistakes should not lead us to underestimate the big work that was done by the party members in fighting famine, even in the grow-more-food campaign, or in the trade-union campaigns, which served to keep the base of the party alive.

Our basic slogans about people's war of winning the war, of national government, of national unity, of national defence, grow more food, all no doubt were correct and we alone had correct basic slogans. But the point is that in implementing them we followed ways which were reformist, which were sometimes antimass, which sowed illusions and therefore we could not reap the full advantage for our people.

In fact the mistakes we committed obstructed the realisation of our political objectives and the growth of the party. No one however should misunderstand thereby that we have committed nothing but mistakes. On a basically correct line we committed a number of mistakes. That is the blunt and simple truth.

It was not only in connection with the attitude to imperialism but in connection with the understanding of the day-to-day developments of the war that we committed a number of mistakes. Just because we had the conception

that the final military collapse of fascism would automatically lead to freedom of the world, we did not care to bother about the changes in the military situation developing during the course of the war, changes which would have enabled us to adjust our political line to suit new conditions. For instance, one of the biggest turningpoints in the war was the battle of Stalingrad. We declared that fascism was now to be defeated and annihilated in the shortest possible time. But the battle of Stalingrad fought just before our party congress met should have enabled us to adopt a still more supple line in connection with the war and embark upon more courageous and daring tactics in relation to imperialism.

While continuing to support the war we could have decided to apply extreme pressure against imperialism, both political and economic, and created a serious situation for it. Even ordinary men began to see that after Stalingrad it was very difficult for Japan to invade India with any chance of success. But we still went on believing that invasion of India was as easy as before, that the battle of Stalingrad did not alter anything so far as our defence was concerned, and this was carried on to such a ridiculous extent that even when the entire world was saying that the Japanese invasion had receded to the background, our press kept on saying that the Japs will attack again and again. If we had grasped this central fact that the military defeat of fascism would unleash new political forces and not liberate peoples automatically, if we had understood that imperialism was still strong and was conspiring to ensure its domination after the end of the war, we would have started taking a firm stand against its machinations and not believed that our freedom would automatically come after the war and therefore nothing need be done with regard to imperialism.

The signal failure to assess the political significance of the battle of Stalingrad, the political significance of the military defeats of fascist armies, made us toe a line which was not justifiable even in the worst days of nazi attack.



It gave imperialism much room to manoeuvre at the cost of the people.

It was not only on the question of imperialism that we developed illusions but also on the question of the bourgeois leaders. In *Forward to Freedom* there was no understanding of the class character and policy of the National Congress leaders. Considered as popular and national leaders, the class character of the leaders was forgotten. The party no doubt courageously came out against the lead of the National Congress leaders, against the 9th August lead of the Congress leaders, but yet we failed to understand that what was being done was a part of the compromising policy of the national bourgeoisie. The party therefore only became ardent champion for the release of national leaders and advocated its line of people's war without unmasking the compromising policies of the National Congress leaders. To save its anti-imperialist prestige, it caught at every straw and glorified the National Congress leaders as antifascist when sections of them counted on Jap victory.

The 9th August struggle was not a gamble as we described it but a calculated shot of the bourgeois leaders to drive a hard bargain under circumstances which were far from favourable to the government. Instead of exposing this adventurist politics in which Nehru was as much a partner as Sardar Patel or Jayaprakash Narayan, we went on sowing illusions that they were antifascist. This was done in the name of a popular approach to the people, but was really an excuse to glorify the bourgeois leaders and continued the policy of trailing behind them. This is seen on hundreds of occasions but more so on the occasion of Gandhiji's fast in February 1943. This is what the central committee resolution writes:

"From behind prison bars Gandhiji has denounced sabotage and anarchy. He has given call for unity with the League. In the name of the Congress, in the name of Congress-League unity, stop sabotage, anarchy, smash the fifth column." Further, "Gandhiji's statements have swept

away every obstacle, every prejudice that stands in the way of our great patriotic parties uniting among themselves and with the peoples of the United Nations. He has answered back all the slanders hurled against our national movement by the bureaucracy and reaffirmed the staunch antifascist stand of the Congress. He has categorically disowned sabotage and anarchy on behalf of the Congress. He has revealed that the Congress was on the eve of new negotiations with the League prior to 9 August."

This was a tribute to Gandhiji at a time when the astute leader of the bourgeoisie was opening new doors for negotiations, after the collapse of his movement which sought to exploit the fascist invasion of India. By giving a certificate of antifascism to Mahatma Gandhi and the Congress leaders, we supported their politics. In continuing to praise them as leaders of antifascist forces, we really trailed behind the national bourgeoisie.

It was about this time that even Stalin's report to the 16th congress of the CPSU(B) was 'corrected' by Adhikari by deleting, in a reprint, the references to Gandhiji as a liberal compromiser in the service of the imperialist bourgeoisie against the colonial national-revolutionary movement. This should show how deep was the subservience to nationalist bourgeois leaders in the minds of some leading comrades.

The characterisation of the policy of the national leadership in the September 1942 resolution is also on a non-class basis. It says the national leaders, instead of going all out to unite the people to rouse them to do everything which strengthens the country's defence against the fascist aggressors and forge mass sanctions for securing national government for national defence, chose the opportunist path of inactivity, of nonembarrassment, of non-cooperating with defence measures hoping thereby to win the national demand as a gift from imperialism. About its compromise, about its attempts to exploit the menace to national defence, there is no word. This emerges from a

nonclass understanding of the national leaders and from the previous policy of trailing behind them.

The campaigns launched by the party for national unity, for the release of national leaders, also served to strengthen this illusion, all the more so because the national leaders were victims of imperialist repression. Actually, by the backdoor, party policy once more became dependent on the good wishes of the bourgeois leaders. It amounted to saying that if the bourgeois leaders would be released and man national defence, we would be happy. Whenever we protested against imperialism or criticised it, it was only in this connection, the failure to release national leaders and nothing more. The campaign for the release of national leaders only became an excuse to glorify them, to put in their mouths antifascist phrases and pay a tribute to their antifascist motive which they did not have.

The result of this wrong policy was its wrong approach to national unity which was also conceived in a typically reformist manner. There is no doubt that national unity or Congress-League unity was very correct and a revolutionary slogan but its revolutionary significance could be realised only by the proletariat independently attempting to unite the people and not by making itself dependent on the will of the two sections of the bourgeoisie. Our appeals to the Congress leaders to accept selfdetermination and our appeals to the League leaders to demand the release of the Congress leaders and thus unite, really became opportunist policies. We became dependent on both the leaders and did not activise the masses independently of them and in opposition to them. In fact there is no effort to rouse the masses against profascist and pro-imperialist policies of both leaders. Thus, in spite of the correct slogan of Congress-League unity, we continued to trail behind both of them.

In this connection the contortions of our policy on self-determination constitute open evidence as to how we

trailed behind the leaders of both parties. We will deal with that question a little later.

The question of national unity therefore was neither based on the common class ties through economic struggles because we began to abjure all class approach. It was not based on the common struggle for demands in the peasant areas because here again we generally abjured open fights against landlords and moneylenders nor was it based on the exposure of imperialism and the bureaucracy because we were afraid of this deviation. Logically from the very nature of our line, unity became more and more an appeal to the leaders which really summed up the process of trailing behind both the bourgeoisie.

No doubt we talked about national unity for food, national unity for defence, national unity for the release of Congress leaders, etc. but our ways and methods were more of appealing to all the leaders to unite.

It was then this kind of right-reformism which was dominant till the end of the war. For all these mistakes which would now horrify ordinary party members, no single leader is responsible but the entire central committee is directly responsible and more so is the polit bureau. If we understand this, then we will be able to understand the difficulties in the way of the party in effecting a change in the line in the new period and the subsequent conflicts that arose inside the central committee, revealing two trends, one a deep-seated reformist trend which wanted to continue the old line of trailing behind the bourgeoisie and the other struggling to get out of the bog of reformism and taking vacillating step towards Marxian understanding of the new situation.

The end of the war presented us with a new problem. The war was over and our rosy illusion of the automatic liberation of all peoples including India was not realised. But we would not be beaten. The September 1945 meeting of the central committee continued to nurse reformist illusions and made the following formulation:

"The international situation, the victory of the forces of

world democracy, opens the prospect of immediate peaceful realisation of Indian freedom through alliance with British labour and with the support of the United Nations."

All the deviations of the war period are rolled here into one sentence and added to that there are the deviations which would prove very dangerous for the new period. At a time when the Indian people were entering the period of armed conflict with imperialism and when the bourgeoisie was getting ready to strike a treacherous deal over the head of the people, we assure the people of prospects of immediate peaceful realisation of Indian freedom. At a time when British labour was entering the path of betraying the British working class, we assert that alliance with British labour will lead to Indian freedom. And now we realise how wrong it was to think that India could get her freedom with the aid of the United Nations because the United Nations included only one big socialist power and the conflicts between socialist and imperialist states continued. All that India could hope to get from the United Nations was verdicts like the verdict on the Kashmir issue and not freedom.

Here was therefore faith in social-democracy which was turning treacherous, faith in automatic collapse of imperialism, faith in the United Nations and failure understand that the major powers there were imperialist powers out to grab the world, a nonclass understanding of the international situation and a totally wrong understanding of the Indian situation when India was entering a decisive period of conflict and struggle.

How does this document define the internal situation?

The internal situation was defined as one threatening to make civil war inevitable and leaving initiative in the hands of British reaction but nowhere seeing the vast mass struggles that were developing under our very eyes. So that we find that we continue with the war outlook again in the postwar period.

Again we fail to characterise the national leaders as

national bourgeois leaders and describe it apart from Indian big business. The resolution says that imperialist strategy for India is to rally Indian big business for collaboration. At the same time it does not unmask both the Congress and League leaders as bourgeois compromising leaders but merely says that there is Indian disunity, not exposing the selfish class policies which create this disunity and then it makes this formulation that imperialist plans of British reaction would be still-born if it were not for the disunity of the Indian national forces and the vacillating attitude of the British labour leaders towards the whole colonial problem in general and India in particular.

On the Indian situation the resolution only says there is strife and no unity. And its tailism behind the bourgeoisie it expresses by saying that Indian freedom will be won if we can successfully solve our national differences meaning thereby that if Congress and League leaders solve their mutual differences, thus making Indian freedom completely dependent on the selfish policies of the two bourgeoisie. There is no perspective of struggle, no call for struggle. In fact a nonclass pride is taken in not fighting the other two parties. The resolution states: "The true role of the party is as the party of unity which fights for justice and freedom all round irrespective of the attitude of other parties and interests towards itself, which has an undying faith in the sound national and democratic sentiments of the entire people and which is bent upon rousing their best and fighting the worst from whatever quarter it comes."

And it denounces "the sectarian left reaction which will wrongly understand the emphasis on the independent role of the party as the call to fight the other two parties, indulge in sectarian selfglorification of the party", etc.

Thus warnings are given not to fight the other two parties, not to fight their policies, their leaders are not criticised according to their class policies and unity of these two parties is made the sole condition of national freedom. Not the upsurge of the people, their fighting unity realised

in the course of struggle, despite bourgeois opposition, but the voluntary unity of these two sets of leaders. That is how every time the party resolutions came to the conclusion that the situation is one of greatest opportunity and greatest peril. These formulations summed up the tailism of the party behind the bourgeois leaders.

Again in the resolution there was no attempt made to understand the real change that had come in the international situation. With the end of the war, the role of social-democracy had rapidly changed. American imperialism was again emerging as successor to hitler-fascism. The conflicts between the revolutionary people of eastern Europe led by the Soviet Union and the imperialist world was growing. At the same time everywhere colonial upsurge was reaching the level of rebellion and armed conflict. All this was not seen in the document or in the December resolution of the party.

An attempt was no doubt made in the original document drafted by Adhikari to put the international situation properly and that document did give some understanding of the change in the balance of forces throughout the world after the defeat of fascism. But that document itself completely overestimated the role of social-democracy and yet strangely enough there was a solitary protest against that document as overestimation of social-democracy. The other comrades rejected what was really valuable in that document, namely, its sober understanding of the international situation. In its place was substituted a preamble to the September resolution which is no analysis of the international situation and which is sufficient to show to what depths of reformism all the party leaders had sunk inasmuch as they would not sit even to consider the change in the international situation after the most gigantic and colossal war that the world has ever seen. How impervious the minds of the party leaders had become to international changes, how all of them had practically replaced proletarian internationalism by bourgeois nationalism could be seen from the single fact that after the end of the war the

party leaders did not think it worthwhile to study the world situation again and draw strategy and tactics on the basis of this situation. It was the same mistake which was committed at the beginning of the war period when the party leaders did not accept the changed character of the war.

Failing to understand the international situation, the depth of political crisis at the close of the war, the desperation of the masses, the party continued to trail behind the national bourgeoisie again in December and November. The December meeting of the central committee took place when two things had already happened in the country. The Congress leaders were released a few months earlier and mass meetings took place with lakhs of people attending them to welcome them and it was obvious that no power on earth could really defeat the desperate people. By November, the great INA demonstration had already taken place in Calcutta, sending shivers down the imperialist spine. While comrades in Calcutta had instinctively reacted to these happenings in their city, the central committee which held its meeting in December in its resolution did not even mention the INA demonstration or the great upsurge that was already working itself through strikes, meetings and anti-imperialist conflicts.

Again the December resolution begins with the formulation of "unprecedented opportunity to make the final bid for power and of the greatest danger of national disruption through strife among our major parties".

Though the resolution in a loose way talked about united struggle for freedom, it totally underestimated the depth of the upsurge and did not come out with any slogan of real struggle. On the other hand it came out with promise of better future and better freedom plan only. In December it had become obvious that both Congress and League were hatching a treacherous compromise with imperialism. Instead of directing fire against it, the resolution only says that there is danger of unilateral compromise and disruption arising out of it. It does not nail down the



leaders of both the parties as compromisers, unmask them and put forward the programme of struggle in opposition to them. On the other hand it attacks revolutionary strategy as surrender to economism and elementary upsurge. For instance, it writes:

"The first minority trend is purely sectarian which bases itself entirely on the elemental upsurge that is already visible in the new postwar period, glorifies it and suggests tactics of the period that we applied in building up the initial workingclass movement in period 1929-34. It glorifies workingclass action only to cover up the isolation of the working class to which such a policy inevitably leads. It seeks the glory of debating with the national bourgeois leaders from a distance and hopes that the patriotic masses will come over to our side. It also leads to the adoption of a narrow strategy of class versus class and left versus right instead of the correct strategy of national unity versus national disruption."

This hatred for class versus class was not accidental but had become a part of the consciousness of some leading members of the central committee. Through the attack on what they called sectarianism they were really attacking a revolutionary line of leading the upsurge, of heading the upsurge, which was already breaking out and of turning it against the compromisers and imperialists. They attacked it because they wanted the bourgeoisie also to be within this upsurge and lead it. In fact the fear of mass struggles which developed in the period of war is continued in the September and December resolutions and in this resolution it again comes out in the shape of a warning against vanguardist mistakes when strike struggles were breaking over our heads and we were lagging behind them.

Once again we find differences between the leaders of the two parties being made excuses for rejecting an independent proletarian policy, the fear of mass struggles, failure to expose the class character of the leaders and failure to lead the mass battles that were developing

before our eyes. In the name of fighting the danger of disruption, the entire thing is made dependent on the two wings of the bourgeoisie. There is no call for struggle, there is only a programme of mass amelioration. It will be seen that neither the workingclass strikes that were developing one after another, nor the huge demonstrations and strikes of the armed forces was making any meaning on the members of the central committee. It misses the role, the changed policy that imperialism was adopting towards the national bourgeoisie and the desperate efforts of the national bourgeoisie to come to compromise with imperialism, though clear statements about this were made by some members of the central committee.

Here is one such statement taken from the minutes of the central committee:

"Not very satisfied with the presentation of Joshi's report and Adhikari's contribution. Hangover of old period still. Got to sharply bring out main change—imperialism is the main enemy. For example, we have not studied economic situation when imperialist economy is facing a final collapse. Economic crisis—world and Indian—looming large. Out of this arises new revolutionary struggle, strategy against British imperialism. What is the setup? Imperialists seeking a new way out—with new social allies—old landlords and princes are not enough. They seek to meet strengthened national bourgeoisie—and "balance of imperialist leaning" towards the Congress and away from the League. See change from Linlithgow to Wavell. This is in line with need for exports in Britain. They are seeking a new alliance with the Congress, not only against the League but also the growing mass movement. Which is the direction of the mass struggles? Not just local struggles—but heading for national general strike—e.g. in the railways—against wage-cuts and unemployment. Similar blow-up in the countryside. In this setting, present disruptive line of Congress and League leaders has to be seen. Spontaneous anticommunist assaults have begun after Congress leaders lighted the flame. Congress free-

dom demagoguery created anticommunist and anti-League feeling. League doing same. In this period, cut out idea of any possibility at all of peaceful freedom. It is opportunism to think there is. Path of partial struggles of a new type—they will try to crush it as 'provocation'. This will mean sharp conflict between Congress and the people. Great role of these struggles as unifier just as in previous periods particularly periods of communal riots.

"Hence it will be a common Hindu-Muslim leadership leading big mass Hindu-Muslim struggles against imperialism, will be a big lever to change the consciousness of the people, and unity will be seen in practice, increasingly forged in struggle.

"In this period the specific policy of the bourgeois leaders of the Congress will be to smash independent class organisations of the workers and peasants. They themselves start rival organisations and in coming period, they will use their official positions to buttress these and smash genuine trade unions and kisan sabhas. But their capacity to do this will be less and less because of their antistrike slogan. But there is another cadre also, August cadre, which will be wanting to bring about strikes, etc. Thus in this big upsurge, we shall have to employ in trade-union front tactics of old united front, united front to struggle for workers' demands. This will actually prevent disruption on TU and kisan field."

Here was a clear indication about the way things were happening, though fundamentally the role of the national bourgeoisie was not analysed, yet the fact that imperialism was trying to rely on it was recognised, a fact which should have led us to change our line immediately and boldly in the context of the revolutionary upsurge that was developing.

But instead the central committee passed a resolution which again recognised the upsurge only formally, holding to the tails of the national bourgeoisie in the name of fighting disruption and decided to give only electoral battle to the Congress and the League.

The trailing behind the bourgeoisie and blunt refusal to characterise its ministries was seen in the formulation in the resolution of April 1946 meeting of the central committee. The resolution states:

"It is inevitable that inside the party some comrades loosely begin talking about Congress ministries being fascist or semifascist. The proper party characterisation of the Congress and League ministries is that they are popular ministries...because the organisations they represent are the biggest popular organisations of our country, embodying in howsoever a distorted and wrong way, the freedom urge of the vast majority of our people. In addition the Congress is committed to a broad democratic programme of national reconstruction, however reformist it may be."

Thus once again the class characterisation of the ministries is not done and we cheat ourselves by calling them popular only to slow down the struggle against bourgeois compromisers. From this conclusions have been drawn which really are meant to keep down mass struggles:

"All mass leaders should see and awaken the militants to the realisation that the mass work in the new period both on the trade-union and kisan fronts is possible only with the determined political approach of regarding both the Congress and the League ministries as popular ministries." This was made at a time when the Congress ministries were already shooting down workers and striking terror.

Not only that. A deliberate effort is made to distinguish between the leaders of the Congress and the League and the vested interests whose political representatives they are. The formulation is made:

"Together with this development the influence of vested interests has also grown both inside the Congress and the League and this requires of the party that in its campaign and agitation it must concentrate fire on the vested, reactionary and communal interests and isolate them from the popular ministries. Failure to do so is to allow such

elements to secure a firm grip over the ministries and intensify their offensive against the party, thus isolating it from the people."

This was the source of political opportunism and illusions about Congress ministries conceding the demands of the workers and fighting the capitalists under popular pressure, a policy which was persistently pursued till recently, which reached its culmination in the Mountbatten resolution and the slogan of all-support to the Nehru government.

This nonclass approach leads to the following formulation:

"Our tactical line is based on the approach that the political differences between us, the Congress and the League should not come in the way of cooperation between all—in people's common interests, which we are all pledged to safeguard and implement, and in isolating and concentrating fire on the vested interests attempting still further to tighten their grip over the ministries." As if the ministries and Congress leaders were not interested in maintaining the profits of the capitalists and the hold of the landlords! And that is why again a warning is given against criticism of the ministries.

"In executing this task, the party will particularly guard against the grave danger of drifting into the attitude of only exposing the shortcomings or antipopular acts of the ministries, which can only lead to the growing isolation of the party from the masses and thus play into the hands of the reactionary and disruptive elements", though the resolution says that we must firmly criticise all non-popular measures.

This opportunist policy is of course put forward on the basis of fighting sectarian reactions:

"While we emphasised the need to take a positive approach towards the new ministries because the urgent need is to combat elemental sectarian reactions in our

own ranks, we not only do not seek to encourage but seriously warn the entire party against entertaining any illusions about the new ministries."

Having sowed a lot of illusions, the resolution wants to dispel them with one sentence. In actual fact the resolution has come to a stage at which on every point it is giving a counterformulation, a balancing formulation, thus negating every positive formulation that it makes. So out of touch with reality had the understanding of the central committee become that more and more it had to come out with warnings on all points so that every point was in succession negated by the following point.

The election once more derailed the party and strengthened the illusions about disruption, about the strength of the bourgeoisie and the strength of the Congress, illusions which were being shattered in the very course of mass struggles. It is very strange that this meeting of the central committee which met two months after the rebellion of naval ratings only casually mentions that great event and does not even care to study the character of the new upsurge, where it is leading, the qualitative change that is coming over India. And that for the simple fact that the election had demoralised party leaders to such an extent that they could not think of striking an independent path, independent of the leaders of the two bourgeois parties.

The election manifesto of the party bears out all the criticisms of the party line that have been made hereto. The manifesto which was issued in the midst of revolutionary battles begins with the sentence: "The Communist Party is the only party that does not malign or raise its arm against other patriotic organisations." At a time when we had to unmask the role of Indian capitalists and Indian national leaders and fight them tooth and nail, the manifesto states that "the only call of our party is Indian must not fight Indian, but all Indians together must fight the British enslavers". There is nowhere a real call to action

but constitutional demands which finally end in the following:

"The Communist Party pledges to the people that it shall not rest till the new popular ministries pass within the very first year of coming into power three new democratic laws; only the enactment of these laws and their rigorous application will end the domination of the feudal parasites, blackmarketeers and usurers, over the economy of the village and ensure the entire people their daily food, thus preventing the calamity of new famines."

The promise was acts of Congress ministries and nothing more. The manifesto was written in this strain and though it talks here and there about joint struggle, struggle is the real thing which is absent from it.

The August (1946) resolution of the CC was the first successful attempt to break through the shackles of reformism to a revolutionary understanding of the postwar situation. It was preceded by sharp conflicts in the PB which came up before the CC.

The August resolution, by returning to the revolutionary perspective and throwing overboard the politics of the war period, constituted a big achievement of our party. The August resolution sought to correct all the major deviations of the previous periods:

(1) It demanded a revolutionary struggle against imperialism and raised the question of power.

(2) It correctly characterised the class policies of the Congress and League leaders as compromising policies of the bourgeoisie and demanded fight against them.

(3) It placed the upsurge, understood its revolutionary significance and correctly placed the direction in which it was spontaneously moving.

(4) It understood the full meaning of the qualitative change in the Indian struggle with the beginning of armed clashes and the participation of the armed forces in the struggle against imperialism.

(5) It restored the minimum programme of democratic revolution in the party platform as a programme of immediate realisation.

(6) It frontally attacked the fear of struggles by calling on the party not only to lead partial struggles but placed before it the perspective of local battles.

(7) It restored the connection between political and economic battle of the masses.

(8) It did away with the production disease of the war period and correctly understood the procurement plans of the government.

The August resolution was really a revolutionary call to anti-imperialist action and a call to fight the compromising policies of the bourgeois leadership, a call to lead the great mass battles that were sweeping the country as a result of the postwar crisis, battles which the party was ignoring and whose revolutionary significance it had not yet understood. The August resolution gave a line which sought to rescue the party and the working class from the clutches of the bourgeoisie and make the proletariat strike an independent path in opposition to both sections of compromisers.

The August resolution itself had its weaknesses. It did not base itself on the understanding of the international situation and the general world position, nor did it take into consideration the basic fact of the growing world crisis of capitalism and the new strategy which imperialism was employing in India. It failed to understand the basic change in the role of the bourgeoisie and the change in the relations between imperialism and the bourgeoisie that was coming to the forefront under the stress of the growing revolutionary struggle and the need for economic collaboration on both sides. The main weakness of the August resolution was that it really did not analyse the role of the Indian bourgeoisie and base itself for its new orientation on this changed understanding of that rôle. In spite of its call to fight the compromising policy of the national



bourgeoisie, the August resolution itself argued on the basis as if the national bourgeoisie might lead a struggle again and its compromise with imperialism can be broken on the strength of the mass forces. In short the resolution overestimated and not underestimated the role of the bourgeoisie. Nonetheless the resolution was a great step forward and a firm step towards a revolutionary understanding of the new situation and signalises the return of the party to revolutionary politics.

Discussions on the resolution revealed that certain comrades like P. C. Joshi had become such hardened reformists that they would not care to understand the new situation, the new kind of class alliance and would doggedly fight to maintain the old reformist line. Joshi first opposed the August resolution. He himself prepared the draft which abjured struggle against bourgeois compromise, glorified the role of the bourgeoisie and did not at all place the revolutionary perspective before the party, much less slogans of action like general strike, etc. After a lot of discussion Joshi formally accepted the resolution, but once again in the PB meeting tried to liquidate it by making formulations like 'partial struggles might be conducted as partial struggles', thus divorcing them of the real revolutionary significance in the present situation. Though the resolution was adopted unanimously, immediately after its adoption Joshi carried on a persistent fight against it and did his best to sabotage its operation by pushing ahead his own reformist understanding of the situation.

The wave of riots which started in Calcutta gave him the first opportunity once again to create doubts about the upsurge and make his earlier formulations of greatest opportunities are greatest danger. The great struggles of the working class which our party led all over the country and in which some of our best workingclass comrades were shot dead under the regime of the Congress ministries did not create anger in Joshi's mind against the ministries, but he adopted an attitude of panicky retreat before repression, began to call these struggles sectarian

and argue as any opponent of the party will argue, namely, that these struggles were miniature revolutions. Joshi developed a theory that we were repressed because we were sectarian and so on, thus giving a clean alibi to the Congress ministries, an alibi which was consistent with his refusal to fight the bourgeois leaders. Instead of inspiring the party and its members to face the ferocious repression launched by the bourgeois leaders, instead of indicting the national leaders for playing their own selfish class game and the game of imperialism, Joshi utilised every occasion of repression, of breakdown of struggle, of illegality, to create panic and demoralisation in our ranks and to prepare for the retreat from the line of leading mass struggles. This was very much in evidence in connection with his understanding of the struggles in the south, the glorious struggles of the working class, textile, railway and other workers in the south, struggles of which any communist party would be proud. The understanding about these struggles was that they were sectarian outbursts, with the result that some comrades began to characterise Vayalar as a private struggle and would not include the Vayalar martyrs and mention them in *People's Age* in the 15th August number.

Actually through these struggles, the party was breaking the isolation of its earlier period, reforging its links with the old class bases and was becoming an object of admiration among the critics, opponents and even enemies of the party. The net result of these struggles in the south at least was that a basis is laid for a mass membership of the party from the working class, perhaps the only province which can boast of it. It was exactly in this period that Joshi and a number of other comrades saw growing isolation of the party. When they were faced with the growing support of the working class, then they made another strange formulation that our strength in the working class is increased, but nonetheless we are isolated from the national front.

The December (1946) meeting of the CC saw Joshi's

concerted attack on the August resolution. The draft that he submitted openly repudiated the upsurge and came out with the formulation that since the formation of the interim government the upsurge has got disrupted and riots are the main reality. And this at a time when the strike wave was continuously mounting and the discontent was gathering all round. Though Joshi's draft was rejected and everybody saw through it, yet it was obvious that he wanted the party to return to the old reformist lines, abjure the revolutionary perspective and wanted to abandon all fight against the compromising policies of the leaders and concentrate on Hindu-Muslim unity. He again wanted the party to go back to organising capitalist production in the name of national reconstruction and came out with proposals in respect of that. He consistently wanted to offer them his reformist line on all fronts. In launching this attack he seized on riots, he seized on repression and more particularly he seized on the temporary illusions of the people about the interim government. He characterised the formulation in the August resolution about the interim government and the Congress leadership as sectarian, when there was nothing sectarian about it, and was able to secure some backsliding of the earlier position. His attack was that the August resolution underestimated the popular character of the interim government under the Congress leadership, that it stressed too much the class character of the government under Congress leadership, that it underestimated the role of the bourgeoisie and the bourgeois leaders in the national camp. We have seen that the August resolution could have been attacked really from the other end, that it did not see that the oppositional role of the bourgeoisie had ended. But Joshi chose to attack it from the reformist end and got some concessions. Using these concessions, he launched a frontal offensive on his own against the August resolution. In letters to the CC members, he denounced the resolution as trotskyite, meaning thereby that its attack against the bourgeois leaders, its insistence on the upsurge and

its revolutionary call for struggle against imperialism were all wrong. Joshi then produced the pol-org letter of February 1947 which was nothing but a total repudiation of August 1946. In his dogged struggle for his reformist line, Joshi circulated this reformist document in opposition to the other PB member (B. T. Ranadive), the third (G. Adhikari) being absent in England. This document in a subtle way seeks to take the party back to the prewar line and is a perfect screen covering the bourgeois leadership, handing over the working class to its tender mercies. Some of its formulations are:

"The *main weakness* of imperialism lies in the fact that the bourgeois leadership which it is using against us is also the popular leadership, embodiment of their aspirations, bound by programmatic pledges, answerable to the people. It is very much on the defensive. However aggressive its language in defending terror against us, it goes against all national tradition and is the antithesis of how it had promised to 'govern'...

"Our aim therefore is to destroy the strength of imperialism, and increase our strength to defeat its policy against us.

"How do we destroy the strength of imperialism? By driving a wedge between the imperialist bureaucracy and the bourgeois leadership by rousing the common people, its own followers to intervene."

What is stated here is the exact opposite of what the August resolution had stated and especially the exact opposite of the reality. The strength of imperialism was that it was able to compromise with the leaders who had a popular basis. It was not itself a weakness, but its strength and secondly the strategy suggested by Joshi of driving a wedge between the imperialist bureaucracy and the bourgeois leaders was exactly the opportunist strategy of not fighting the bourgeoisie, of giving a clean alibi to the bourgeois leaders in the name of fighting imperialism. Instead of denouncing the compromisers who

in the interest of the bourgeoisie were now launching terror against the people, Joshi suggested the strategy of detaching the bourgeois leaders from the bureaucracy as if the bourgeois leaders were not interested in suppressing the working class for their own class interests.

"We denounce the terror against us as imperialist conspiracy to split freedom forces and smash them in isolation. It is today us; it will be others tomorrow. This corresponds to reality; anti-imperialist traditions of the past and the interests of future final struggle which are a common growing urge. In every simple case we expose how particular bureaucrats have lied against us and pressed for action and done what atrocities and thus rouse the anti-British indignation of the people. In short, we show how the policy against us is part of British plan against India's freedom struggle and the real agency that implements it is imperialist bureaucracy. We thus make our agitation real.

"We denounce the terror against us as having been pressed for by vested interests in alliance with the bureaucracy and explain that listening to them means not meeting people's demands but suppressing them, not implementing electoral pledges but breaking them, not solving but intensifying economic crisis. We positively explain the demands of the fighting people as the dire need to live, as the healthy urge for a better life which the common enemies of the entire people seek to resist. We denounce vested interests as British allies...

"... Just as on national-political plane our slogan is: *Break with the British* plan and unite for national struggle, the key slogan of the antirepression campaign is: *Break with the bureaucracy*. guarantee civil liberties to all: let the people judge policies and practice.

"But the popular ministries own up as their own the ordinances, bans, arrests, shootings. Just when they do it, we have to say you are owning responsibility for police deeds, sheltering their crimes. you are responsible to the people, yours is the responsibility to the people, their free-

dom movement and its ideals. Fulfil your true responsibility against the imperialist bureaucracy and in fulfilment of pledges by which you are bound..."

This was the line advocated in the document, a line which is nothing but abjuring of the struggle against the bourgeois compromisers in the name of driving a wedge between imperialism and the bourgeoisie. Actually it was a line of making the masses defenceless in the face of the ministerial offensive and preventing the working class from exposing the conspiracy that was being hatched by the compromisers against the people.

Joshi made the same reformist formulation with greater precision on page 15 of his document:

"The imperialist tactic is to hide itself behind the popular ministries and isolate us by exploiting anticommunism and thus crush us. Our countertactic is to isolate the bureaucracy, expose not only the offensive being its plan, the agency its own bureaucracy and the reason being imperialist reason and our offence being anti-imperialist and show its voice not only in the propaganda against us, but expose the hand of its own agency in the terror against us..."

"In such a situation, if our propaganda makes it primarily the issue of rightwing offensive against our party we play the imperialist game, only isolate ourselves more, and will succeed neither in isolating imperialism nor putting the right wing on the defensive nor in winning popular support. This is the one big correction we have to make in our understanding. Our explanation has to be *not* that the right is hitting at us because it is compromising but imperialism is hitting at us because it wants to disrupt and divide freedom forces piecemeal with this as the central point. We have to explain why the right wing is owning up and sanctioning the imperialist offensive and drive the conclusion home that the government of the popular ministries is not to own up responsibility for police but discharge their responsibility to the people..."

Here was an entire line to cover up the tracks of the bourgeoisie and make the working class trail behind them. From what did it arise? It arose because of the reformist illusions about the national bourgeois leaders, Joshi still considering the bourgeois leaders only to be popular leaders and not wanting to fight their treacherous role. It arose from a failure to understand the bourgeois leaders themselves, driven by their fear of revolution and narrow class interests, were vitally interested in suppressing the people. It arose from a fear of mass struggles and a fear of repression and totally ignoring the revolutionary upsurge that was sweeping the country. Joshi's document, circulated on his own responsibility, was a frontal attack against the August resolution and a demand that the party be taken to the old reformist line. How grovelling before the bourgeoisie this approach was can be seen from the following:

Frightened by the bourgeois propaganda about communist revolution Joshi wanted the words like 'agrarian revolt' to be banned and all revolutionary significance of partial struggles to be forgotten. His advice is "agrarian revolt must be denounced as mythical to cover the suppression of the peasant movement invented by the bureaucracy", at a time when agrarian revolt was expressing itself precisely through antirent and rent-reduction campaigns, etc. He wanted the party to forget the revolutionary significance of the partial struggles in the present period and made the formulation "to understand the actual nature of the present popular struggles as partial struggles is to get the right understanding of jobs to be done and political perspective not to go wrong. It is very necessary to have this in mind because we ourselves through the central press have been guilty of sectarian overglorification of partial struggles, e.g. the MSP bloodbath at Coimbatore being characterised as the battle of Coimbatore, antiejectment peasant struggle at Basti being called struggle for land, etc."

This was not an innocent formulation. All reformists and social-democrats exactly when they can no longer

control struggles want the masses to understand only the partial limited character of such struggles as when, in the context of the revolutionary situation, these struggles begin to assume revolutionary significance. But the charge of revolution frightened Joshi so much and the swing towards mass struggle inside the party also made him so panicky that he began to suspect that everybody was attempting to manufacture revolution in every small struggle. He was not really correcting any deviation inside the party but expressing only his own fear of revolutionary mass struggles. The reformist advice to the leaders of mass struggles was as follows:

"We should carefully study police tactics in every struggle and aim to minimise conflict to the utmost so that the masses suffer the least terror and the struggle can hold out longest and we get the best possible opportunities to organise it out. We should let the police do its normal duties, e.g. patrol, searches, etc. but if it comes to loot, burn and rape we must put up the best resistance we can in sheer selfdefence..."

This advice was given at a time when the most brutal atrocities were being committed by the police and the workers and our masses had to fight with every ounce of their strength to save themselves and defeat police terror. A more reformist advice could not have been given. What is meant by allowing the police to do its normal duty? The normal duty of the police in times of struggles is to repress the people. The masses were supposed to resist only when looting and burning and raping had started, which are generally the last acts of the police when the mass action had already been beaten down. In fact Joshi's advice was: Don't resist till then. Why was Joshi making such formulations which are unworthy of not only a party leader but an ordinary party member? Because he honestly believed that under the line given by the August resolution, the party and its mass organisations were acting as the provocator. He believed that police repression was due to the provocation given by the party. His characteri-



sation of August resolution as a trotskyite resolution has no other meaning than this and because of this total anti-revolutionary understanding, he gives the advice which seeks to disarm the masses in their hour of need.

In short Joshi's document was an open betrayal of the August resolution and shows his deep reformism. If anything has been responsible for political stagnation and paralysation of the party line since August 1946, the blame will have to be laid at the deep-rooted reformism of Joshi who refused to learn from his colleagues.

It must be admitted that with the line of his pol-org letter, Joshi was able to derail a number of comrades and paralyse their understanding. These comrades themselves were thus guilty of reformism. The implication of Joshi's line on the TU front was a straight return to an antistrike line and more production of the war period. If the party had really seriously attempted to implement this line in practice as Joshi would have liked to do, it would have been wiped out of the working class and justifiably so.

The disastrous deviations which arose on the basis of this line were seen not only in the memorandum submitted by some of the unions in south India, but it was sharply brought home when one of our prominent communist leaders agreed to industrial truce at Delhi a couple of months back. To Bihar, UP and several other provinces the pol-org letter became a substitute for the August resolution and other provinces continued to be confused. It was natural therefore that there should be complete confusion and paralysation of political initiative of the party in this period.

Vacillations and reformism of the majority of the members of the CC, some of whom had now become prominent upholders of the reformist line, reached their culmination in the discussion on the Mountbatten award. Every amendment which sought to put down that the Mountbatten award was a concession to the national bourgeoisie and that the national bourgeois leadership was striking a deal against the interests of the people was negated

or watered down and it was asserted that the Mountbatten award was a concession to the national movement and the Indian people. Thus what was asserted was that it was a retreat by imperialism and an advance for the people. Joshi was a persistent advocate of the theory of advance and was supported by a number of comrades. Again the viewpoints clashed as before, amendments were defeated and the resolution adopted. After the defeat of the amendments about the bourgeoisie and the upsurge the resolution was adopted without opposition because both the trends by now had come to look upon the resolution in different ways. The comrades who stood for the August resolution said that the August resolution was not repudiated and anyway the Mountbatten resolution was a step away from the earlier pol-org letter of Joshi. The comrades who stood for the Mountbatten resolution led by Joshi considered it to be a total repudiation of August resolution. The two trends continued to clash and it was decided that within three months documents should be prepared and the party congress should be called. At the CC meeting itself there was an attempt to explain the resolution in two different ways in repudiation of the August resolution and in support of it and in support of carrying forward the mass struggles.

The vacillations of the latter comrades arose from the fact that they too did not realise that the oppositional role of the bourgeoisie had ended and therefore strove to work out a revolutionary line within the framework of the old understanding. Some of them, especially Adhikari, Ranadive and Ajoy Ghosh, correctly saw that we had made a mistake in placing the Congress and the League in the same category during the earlier period and wrongly ascribed to the latter an oppositional role vis-a-vis imperialism. But they failed to see that the Congress too had ceased to be oppositional and was going towards collaboration. From this resulted a pro-Congress deviation on the part of these comrades which culminated in their formulation at the time of the Mountbatten award that the accession

to the Indian Union itself was progressive. Some other comrades who too were advocating a line of struggle sought to criticise this pro-Congress deviation from a wrong end. They developed a pro-League deviation. They did not stress that the League had always been reactionary and now the Congress itself was becoming reactionary. On the contrary, they accepted that the Congress was progressive and stressed that the League too was progressive though perhaps less so than the Congress. This went to such length that they wanted the CC to hail the League decision to launch direct action in August 1946 as an event full of anti-imperialist significance.

All these facts show that even those members of the CC who were advocating a line of boldly leading struggles and demanding that a final break should be made with reformism were themselves not conscious of the new role of the bourgeoisie. They were ascribing to one or both of them a progressive role when both had become reactionary. The inevitable result was that when the riot offensive came, they sought to make the Congress or the League more responsible for the riots, and apportion blame instead of concentrating fire on the bourgeois policy of compromise as a whole which bred riots.

Thus for their failure to understand the new collaborationist role of the native bourgeoisie, the advocates of the line of struggle failed to wage a consistent battle against reformism inside the CC.

In actual fact the Mountbatten resolution is a thoroughly opportunist resolution which by making concessions here and there to the fight against the bourgeoisie in reality conceals the aim of the leaders of the National Congress. It was opportunist to have described the Mountbatten award as an advance and that new opportunities have arisen for the people. It was opportunist and totally wrong to have made the formulation for a united front between the government and the people. It practically ignores the compromising role of the Congress leaders and whenever it talks of compromise, it talks about big

business, i.e. once more carries forward reformist refusal to fight the national bourgeoisie. It ties the working class and the party to a policy of cooperation with the national bourgeoisie in their nefarious attack against the Indian revolution and while it makes concessions about the programme of the democratic revolution. It again suggests ways and means which would effectively obstruct mass struggles. The opportunism of the Mountbatten resolution can be seen only by understanding it in relation to the resolution passed by the CC at its last (December 1947) session or with the resolution now placed before the congress.

On the basis of the Mountbatten resolution a thorough-going reformist line was being pursued by the party whose first effect was to make the party retreat in panic before the riot offensive and rally behind the government and the compromisers. Its effect was to glorify the national leaders as champions of national unity and as champions of the people against feudal reaction and it landed the party in failing to understand that on 15th of August it was not transfer of power but betrayal by the bourgeoisie. It also led to formulations made and popularised by all the members of PB and also some other CC members "about defending Indian freedom and supporting the Nehru government in defence of Indian freedom".

From the beginning the Mountbatten resolution was interpreted in two ways to justify the line of fighting the bourgeoisie, of mass upsurge and fighting the compromise, and the line of surrendering before the bourgeoisie. These lines began to clash intensely inside the PB on every vital issue.

At the December meeting of the CC it was seen that the majority of the CC had independently come to a correct understanding of the present revolutionary situation and the utter reformism involved in the Mountbatten resolution. The two drafts independently placed by B. T. Ranadive and Bhowani Sen reached almost the same conclusion and carried forward the understanding given by the August

resolution. Once more it was seen that Joshi had become the most hardened reformist and he produced a draft which had not only nothing in common with the other two drafts but was again an attempt to sidetrack the party from the revolutionary policy and derail it on the question of riots. It was again the same blind refusal to fight the national bourgeois leaders, the same subservience which Joshi showed every time in his writings on Gandhiji and Nehru. The running thread in Joshi's writing, whether in his correspondence with Gandhiji or in articles on Nehru has been this grovelling subservience before the bourgeois leaders and Joshi had no faith in the working class. This was once again seen in the December discussion when Joshi would not move an inch from his reformist line even when the world perspective was put to him. Joshi doggedly fought, then gave up his fight and again as in August formally accepted the document only to repudiate it in practice. Joshi accepted the resolution but voted against the document which was adopted by the CC (December 1947) for circulation perhaps just because that document concretely nailed down his own reformism and warned the party against it. His formal acceptance of the resolution however meant no change in his outlook. Now he accepts the resolution unreservedly. In any case it shall be clear that a hardened reformist trend exists inside the CC led by Joshi and had it not been for that trend, the CC and the party would not have been derailed after August 1946 and would have gone on enriching its understanding of the present period. The August resolution of the party was a very concrete lead and a big step forward. Had the line been persistently pursued without hesitation, without vacillation, the party would have been in a much better position and a much stronger position to take its responsibilities in the present period. But while the masses under the leadership of the party acted decisively and faced repression with unbending courage, when the ordinary proletarians discharged their duty by the revolutionary struggle by shedding their blood in every big and small struggle,

while it is they who raised the prestige of the red flag high, faced every repression and every terror, with houses burnt and looted, with jobs lost and women raped, a section of the party leaders by its reformism was trying to cut the ground under their feet and itself getting panicky. That this trend has done incalculable harm to the party has to be admitted by everybody and the responsibility for derailing the party since August 1946 must be squarely placed on Joshi and those who persistently agreed with him through blind following, through their refusal to adopt Marxian criteria and refusal to listen to the voice of their colleagues. In this connection one cannot but mention some special weaknesses of Joshi which only served to show how he cut himself adrift from Marxism. Persistently through the war period and till recently, Joshi developed disregard for Marxian theory. He called Marxism abstract Marxism and in his party schools discouraged the study of 'abstract Marxism' and asked comrades to concentrate on their day-to-day problems. In the CC resolution he characterised class analysis as a narrow conception, class versus class strategy as sectarian and thus talked about class analysis in a reformist petty-bourgeois way. Before submitting his draft for the December session of the CC he confessed that he had not even read Zhdanov's report on the international situation and had the audacity to submit a political report to the party. His conception of party education was to make the party members reformist job-doers divorced from all revolutionary consciousness and that was one of the main reasons why our ranks even when they lead fights get demoralised at a later stage because the CC as a whole had not looked after their Marxist education. But if any one made a principle out of that, it was Joshi.

This critical review should teach all the CC members to look at themselves in an objective manner. In the war period all CC members were guilty of pursuing a reformist policy. This was due in some cases to some of the younger comrades of the CC having implicit faith in Joshi and Adhikari. There is no extenuating circumstance which

could be shown by any of the PB members. One of the reasons why the CC could not come to an earlier decision on the question of policy and get out of the rut of reformism was the blind faith of certain CC members in Joshi and failure by them to apply Marxist criterion to any situation. The result was that even when an opening was made to understand the new situation, the collective mind of the CC could not take advantage of it and would promptly accept denunciation of such an opening as sectarian. The deeprooted reformism of the war period could not go at once but at the same time it has to be admitted that certain comrades became hardened reformists who would not learn. Others continuously vacillated and would readily accept any criticism of imagined sectarianism as an excuse to retreat from revolutionary policies. It is because of these vacillations and hardened reformism that the party was derailed after having reached a correct revolutionary line in August 1946 and the work of organising the Indian revolutionary movement was effectively sabotaged. Those comrades who are mainly responsible for it must candidly accept the mistake and their responsibility. Otherwise there can be no political functioning. The CC as a whole has to get over the old reformist understanding of every event and overcome the basic reformist deviations. These relate to failure to fight the national bourgeois leaders, failure to identify the bourgeoisie with the Congress leaders, failure to lead mass battles decisively because of wrong notions of reconstruction, reformist conceptions of reorganisation of national economy and first and foremost failure to understand that without the hegemony of the proletariat in the democratic struggle, the democratic revolution can never succeed. Today, when we are making a break with our old reformist understanding and replacing it by a correct revolutionary understanding, we must remember that merely understanding the situation in its broader bearings is not enough. In implementing our resolution, we are likely to come up again and again against our old deviations which will cause us to waver and vacil-

late. On the strength of a deeper understanding of Marxism, of the great harm that we have done to our party and our movement by our past mistakes, we must continuously overcome these vacillations and deviations so that the CC as a whole becomes a decisive leadership leading the big mass of revolutionaries that we have in our party, so that it really becomes a fit leader of the party of the proletariat.

#### REFORMIST DEVIATIONS ON SELFDETERMINATION

The recognition of the existence of nationalities and the acceptance on the party platform of the demand of self-determination for nationalities was a great contribution of our party, a contribution made on the basis of our Marxism, a contribution which distinguished us from all other parties and enables us to understand the problem of minorities, the problem of communalism and the problem of partition, better than any other party and gives us confidence to fight them out.

If our party had not understood that the communal problem was also linked up with the problem of nationalities, we would have developed no understanding of the minorities and the nationalities problem except that which is current either among congressmen or socialists which means the only way out for us would have been outright surrender to hindu communalism in one form or other. That way there would have been no hope for us of organising unity of the workers, unity of the peasantry and in the context of present conditions, fighting the war propaganda that is launched by reactionaries. In fact one of the main levers to build the revolutionary unity of our people in the common struggle would have been lost and the party line would have limped on one leg. That is why the recognition of nationalities and the right of selfdetermination, the contributions made to develop clarity on this question, are of immense value to the party.

But unfortunately on this question also as on others while we took basically a correct revolutionary position,



we more and more drifted into opportunist trailing behind the bourgeoisie till we sank deep into the mire of disruptive reformism. In this respect Adhikari's *Pakistan and National Unity* together with the resolution that he drafted for the September 1942 meeting of the central committee are not only not free from blemishes but in many places contain the seeds and germs of the opportunist surrenders that we made in the subsequent period. While Adhikari in his pamphlet correctly states that the question of selfdetermination is linked with the question of democratic revolution and anti-imperialist struggle, that the question of selfdetermination comes on the agenda when the peasant enters the political arena, while he hits against constitutionmongering and warns that our path is the path of revolutionary struggle, of building revolutionary unity of the people, still this is not the central idea of his pamphlet and this core in the end is missed. The pamphlet in reality does not expose the bourgeois leadership as the obstacle and the disruptor of the struggle for selfdetermination and as a force by defeating which alone the people can march forward to selfdetermination. Here and there conflicts between the bourgeoisie are mentioned, their separatism has been mentioned, but the fight against bourgeois leaders is not made an integral and important part of the struggle for selfdetermination. Secondly in his historical review Adhikari misses imperialism completely, a failure quite in keeping with the line advocated in *Forward to Freedom*. The whole conception of how the hindu-muslim problem arose at different times is a nonclass conception in which classes are not taken into account and the deliberate policy of imperialism of divide and rule is screened from the reader's eyes. It is out of this that the subsequent falsification of history arose in the *Final Bid for Power* in which again the role of imperialism is screened and genesis of the hindu-muslim problem is traced to certain wrong ideas in the heads of the leaders of the national movement.

Adhikari's pamphlet further fails to attack the League

leaders and their cry of Pakistan as a weapon of compromise with imperialism, separation being the special form of compromise of the League leaders with the imperialist government. The obstructionist role of Pakistan in dividing the muslim masses from the common struggle, the disruptive role played by the League in connection with this, is ignored and ground is already cleared for drawing the conclusion that Pakistan contains the core of the freedom demand of muslims.

In fact Adhikari's pamphlet commits the same errors as *Forward to Freedom*—refusal to see the bourgeoisie and refusal to fight it. In this case the class character of the League leaders was not seen but hidden. In fact we did not remember the elementary fact that each nationality is composed of several classes and that the bourgeoisie would always strive to exploit the freedom urge or consciousness of any mass to suit its own selfish interests. We further forgot the Leninist axiom that the bourgeoisie is incapable of securing the right of selfdetermination of any nationality and that either it must dominate over other nationalities or it must surrender to imperialism and thus keep the people in bondage. That bourgeois separatism is a form of political betrayal was not seen and that therefore the proletariat cannot adopt an attitude of conciliation towards it is also ignored, it is because of this that we not only refused to fight the disruptive role of Muslim League and Pakistan demand but more and more ourselves make concessions to separatism in the name of popularising and enriching selfdetermination. The disease was one of following at the tail end of the League bourgeoisie. We opportunistically believed "that the central task throughout the war period was the acceptance of selfdetermination by the leaders of the Indian National Congress and the Muslim League against British-imposed deadlock" (December resolution). That is why we continued to have illusions that these two sets of leaders would accept selfdetermination provided we are able to make them understand that it was in their own

interest. This trailing behind therefore began in the resolution of September 1942 when we said: "This would give to the muslims where they are in an overwhelming majority the right to form their autonomous state and even to separate if they so desire." This antidemocratic disruptive idea of the muslims forming a state was not a technical concession to nationality on the basis of religion but was part of the appeasing policy we were following towards the League bourgeois leaders. In fact it was their demand that muslims should have the right to form an autonomous state where they are in a majority. By putting forward this demand, the Muslim League leaders were not championing the cause of any nationality but was successfully disrupting the struggle of the nationalities and the common struggle of the Indian people. In fact we tend to accept this characterisation and begin to trail behind the Muslim League in the very first resolution of ours. Following this whatever we have written, all the writings of the PB members, bear this opportunist stamp and later on we carry this conception to its logical conclusion.

Adhikari's pamphlet correctly stated that Pakistan distorts the rising nationalist urge of the nationalities. And we should have emphasised this fact that it is not putting forward the demand of nationalities but distorting it. But behind that distortion we saw the core of the freedom demand and Adhikari warns that if we did not see the core of freedom demand behind the distortion we would remain blind to realities. It was such formulations that paved the way for subsequent concessions that we made to separatism.

Our position in relation to the muslim masses, the fact that we were weak among them, the fact we had hardly any independent mass base among them, and the fact that we were hardly leading any workingclass and peasant struggles—all combine to create lack of confidence in us regarding our correct stand about selfdetermination and unmasking the League stand.

Though the September resolution did lay down that we should organise hindus and muslims, untouchables and caste-hindus, in their own class organisations and unite them for complete democracy and selfdetermination; though it called to fight hindu chauvinism which denied selfdetermination and muslim chauvinism which demanded a muslim state in muslim-majority areas, still these slogans remained mere words because of the general policy of trailing behind that we were pursuing on every front.

In the hunt for quick Congress-League unity therefore we went on discovering new virtues in League's reactionary resolutions, e.g. B. T. Ranadive's article on Muslim League session in Bombay. And instead of winning the muslim masses independently for antifascism and for self-determination and common democratic struggles and freedom, we went on looking upon the League as the organisation of muslims and the need for making the muslim masses move. It is very strange that throughout all these years we hardly gave any call to the muslim masses to join the party, hardly ever sang in praise of our party which was with the masses and leading their struggles but always asked them to join the Muslim League.

This certainly was not a way of fighting communalism which the Muslim League was preaching every day. The role of the Muslim League leaders were glorified, their separatism was not attacked, and selfdetermination was brought nearer to Pakistan. No efforts were made to secure the independent following for the party or making people see that the party alone had a real programme for the freedom of the muslims. Faced with this we began to move still further in the wrong direction. Instead of understanding that our stagnation was due to subservience to the League bourgeoisie, we become more subservient and distort history and make new characterisations about the League. In the August 1943 CC meeting we began to say: "League is moving towards becoming the national organisation of the muslims representing the freedom urge of mainly the muslims in the majority areas. League lead-

ers are hindering this development and we have to strengthen and speed the development by working to create a progressive democratic trend." Thus we sought to justify our tailism behind the League.

In the party letter dated 16 October 1943, Adhikari says: "We have to make the League capable of fulfilling its role as a national muslim organisation. If we refuse to make this formulation about the League, it means the refusal to make a political turn in the consciousness of the people and their attitude." Again, "the Muslim League as the common political organisation of all the muslims, especially in the majority areas, can and must become the national organisation of the muslims there, uniting them for democratic demands, selfdetermination and independence, for unity with the Congress. It is no more a communal organisation." All this of course was necessary in order to theoretically justify our acceptance of the disruptive Pakistan demand of the League. On par with this, the following is said about the League leaders: "Not to see this growing differentiation inside the League leadership, to damn the reactionary landlord-hoarder, together with Jinnah and the patriotic elements within the leadership of the League, is to miss the reality... The patriotic leaders of the League have shown that they yield to mass pressure under the present impact of crisis." And this at a time when Jinnah and his admirers had almost done nothing to fight the hoarder, the landlord and even to save the East Bengal peasant from the Bengal famine.

This was preparation for further concessions to separatism and from which arose also the strange parallelism that we developed between the Muslim League and the Congress.

Now it was forgotten that the League leaders had generally obstructed the mass struggle of the Indian people and that they were being used as an obstruction by imperialism to beat down the Congress. History was forgotten and also falsified. Justification for separate electorate was found and everything was written which could show that

the League leaders had all (along been leading the muslim masses towards freedom and that Pakistan itself was a child of the Lahore resolution. This falsification of history is seen in this crassest form in the *Final Bid for Power*. All this was ideological preparation for the complete surrender on the question of separatism. This surrender now begins to take place by ourselves stressing the right of separatism and secession in the name of convincing the congressmen about this right at the same time failing to stress unification and voluntary union before the muslim masses. Secondly, it takes place on the basis of a growing support to muslim state.

Instead of emphasising that separatism based on religion is one of the main weapons of the Muslim League leaders in their politics of division and bargain, we begin to say that muslim people and their leaders are not bent on separatism.

When after the release of Gandhiji in May 1944, the Rajaji formula was published we begin to accept a principle which was common to both Rajaji formula and the Pakistan resolution. That was almost accepting the contention of the basic principle enunciated by the League itself for a separate state on the basis of muslim religion as the basis of both Rajaji formula and the Pakistan resolution. The difference was only how much and how. Instead of exposing and rejecting the wrong and disruptive principle which was common to both positions and basing our proposals for unity on the basis of the unifying principle of selfdetermination and clearly coming out against the disruptive character of both formulas and unmasking them as preparation for the coming political compromise and betraying revolutionary struggle we ourselves took a position of separation based on religion. So blind were we to reality that we even failed to understand that Gandhiji's visit to Jinnah was one of the preparations to strike a deal with imperialism and we were actually helping him in doing it. At this time it was in the interests of imperialism also that Jinnah stiffened his demand and by our separat-

ist stand we actually supported him in doing it. And we made the following amazing formulation: "Pakistan is as much the inalienable right of the muslims as swaraj is the right of us all." Here we completely identify the revolutionary demand for selfdetermination which can only come by completely liquidating the imperialist colonial system and defeating the bourgeoisie, with the separatist demand of treacherous compromise with imperialism which the League bourgeoisie had launched. And from that we went on headlong supporting Pakistan more and more: "Once Pakistan is accepted, as the sovereign right to muslim homelands, demarcation of the boundary of Pakistan is only a question of facts and figures." "The muslims can claim as of right all the areas where they are a majority but they cannot cast their eyes on one foot of extra territory."

Thus we completely accepted a muslim state identified with selfdetermination.

And we even began to flatter the muslims by saying that Indian muslims would become masters of the biggest muslim state in the world and so on.

Actually we should have exposed the Rajaji formula, we should have exposed Jinnah's demands, we should have exposed the disruptive compromising basis of Gandhi-Jinnah negotiations and once more asserted the right of selfdetermination together with the demand for revolutionary struggle against imperialism. We should have exposed the fact that neither of them was thinking of democracy, of liquidation of landlordism, for both were trying to work out a solution within the framework of the existing system which keeps the ordinary man enslaved.

Again in *They Must Meet Again* we say: "Unqualified recognition of the right of muslim nationalities to establish independent sovereign states in muslim homelands in terms of Lahore resolution of the League."

In this article we finally and completely give up the slogan of selfdetermination of nationalities and also all vestiges of fight against separatism. We no longer stand for

achieving an Indian union of sovereign national units.

Naturally out of this come all kinds of disruptive slogans such as muslim state, Sikhistan. In fact we begin to trail after every section of the bourgeoisie which begins to frighten us by its hold over the people and by its appeal to backward communal sentiments. It was complete panic of the party of the proletariat and retreat before the vested interests instead of bold attack to defeat the poisonous communal propaganda. We forgot the elementary duty to fight for common Indian union. And at the time of the election manifesto, we come out with the slogan of 18 constituent assemblies.

We later on come back to the correct slogan of voluntary Indian union and RPD's (Rajani Palme Dutt's) criticism about the League wakes us up with a shock to its communal character. Though RPD was not able to trace the source of our deviation and perhaps formulated his criticism wrongly saying that we ignored the unifying character of the Congress proposals such as plebiscite, etc. still he laid his finger on a vital spot when he emphasised the communal character of the League and debunked our formulation that Muslim League is a national organisation of the muslims. RPD's formulation enables us to fight against parallelism between the Congress and the League, the wrong parallelism that was developing throughout the war period. Some comrades insisted, and rightly so, that the parallelism be dropped. But they were already late because the new situation created by the postwar upsurge and the compromising policies of the leaders of both parties was establishing a new parallelism under which they could be treated at the same level as compromisers and disruptors, betrayers of the revolution, and collaborators. For some time this deviation, which wanted to drop parallelism when parallelism was real and had basis in fact, persisted and on the basis of that an attempt was made to drive a distinction between the Indian union and Pakistan, the Indian union being considered as more pro-



gressive and Pakistan being considered as reactionary. The opportunism involved in this formulation was apparent when the question of the accession of states came into prominence and when our mistaken support for accession to the Indian union in preference to Pakistan could be clearly seen as a support to one section of the grabbing bourgeoisie against another.

With the division of India brought about by the treacherous and compromising policies of leaders of both parties, the real face of the League and Congress leaders is alike seen, Muslim League having secured exactly the Pakistan they wanted; they had secured it without the help of the Congress and with imperialism and they are parading it as the freedom of muslim homelands. The face of this Pakistan clearly reveals that the muslim masses have been cheated, have been sold in bondage to imperialism and are being repressed for the sake of landlords and capitalists. The role of the League leaders and their communal appeal is also seen. The muslim masses are misled by the communal appeal to act against their own interests, to hunt out the minorities to divert their energies into communal channels so that the united strength is not felt against imperialism and its collaborators.

Pakistan thus has come out neither as the achievement of freedom for any nationality nor for any section of the people, hindu or muslim, but has been an imperialist conspiracy to keep the hindu and muslim masses divided, to fight the common democratic movement and defeat the forces of revolution. When the League was demanding Pakistan, it was this that it was demanding, it was demanding a junior partnership with the landlord-bourgeois clique in power and in the state and was willing to sell the muslim masses in bondage to the imperialists. It was this that it was passing off as the freedom of the muslim homelands and it was this that we had to unmask and fight tooth and nail so that the muslim masses were neither cheated nor betrayed. Our tailist deviation made our fight against this treachery extremely difficult and

because of it we could not warn the muslim masses in time.

We must therefore clearly see that though we had a correct slogan in selfdetermination of nationalities, though that slogan again enables us to look confidently to the future and establish friendly relations between the peoples of the two territories and maintain the integrity of the democratic movement, still in our day-to-day line we pursued the same tailist policy that is outlined in *Forward to Freedom*. We committed the same right-reformist deviation, the same retreat before the bourgeoisie, with disastrous results for national unity. Because of this we failed to stress our independent mobilisation of the muslim masses in the common struggles, economic and political, we began to underrate them and refused to give a call to the muslim workers and peasants to rally round the banner of the party when that alone would have been the banner to carry forward the struggle for selfdetermination. Once again these reformist mistakes ought to be mastered and the party and the leaders ought once for all give up their policy of trailing behind the bourgeoisie, of abjuration of the path of independent leadership of the working class and relying on the bourgeoisie to lead the masses.

### **III**

## **Review Of The Second Congress Of The Communist Party Of India**

The 632 delegates who met at the pandal of the second congress of the Communist Party of India in Calcutta, from 28 February to 6 March, came straight from the numerous battlefields scattered all over India, where the toiling masses of our country are waging bitter and prolonged struggles for an independent and democratic India where the people will rule.

They came from scenes of great strike battles of Bombay and Kanpur, of Madura, Coimbatore and Golden Rock, and of the great industrial area of Calcutta.

They came from the scenes of peasant struggles of Bihar and UP, of the struggles against landlordism in Tamilnadu, Andhra and Malabar and from the areas in Maharashtra where the Warli peasants waged their heroic battle against serfdom and landlord oppression.

They came from the battlefields of struggles against the princely autocracy in the states of Rajputana, Central India, as well as from the states of the south, and above all from the battlefields of Warangal and Nalgonda where the peasants of Telangana are putting up an epic armed resistance against the armed might of the nizam's autocracy and his satellites, the deshmukhs and landlords.

There were student delegates fresh from the great student battles of Bombay, Calcutta and Kanpur, and about fifteen women delegates who are struggling with great determination to build a women's movement in the various

Issued by the political bureau of the central committee of the Communist Party of India, first printed in March 1948.

provinces of India. There were also delegates from those territories of India in the northwest and the east which have been partitioned off and reconstituted as the state of Pakistan.

These delegates all together represented a powerful and rising movement which was challenging the might of the imperialist-bourgeois-feudal combine which had come into existence after the Mountbatten award, a movement of the toiling and the common people fighting against the collaborationist policy of the bourgeois leaders, fighting for the victory of the democratic revolution.

#### FIVE YEARS OF TRIALS AND STRUGGLES

The congress was meeting after five years, years of great political changes in the world as well as in India. These were also years of great trials and struggles for the Communist Party, years through which despite slander and opposition, despite brutal repression, it had grown in stature as a leading revolutionary force in India.

During the war, the Communist Party took the correct proletarian stand of lining up with the antifascist camp which was headed by the USSR, the bulwark of socialist revolution.

It took that stand because it was a stand of correct proletarian internationalism, a stand in conformity with the interests of the people of India as well as of all other countries.

It enabled the proletariat in every country to join in the common fight not only to smash fascist-imperialism but also to strengthen the people's democratic forces against Anglo-American imperialism.

In India the parties of the left, which talked in terms of socialism and the world workingclass movement, betrayed the cause of the world workingclass and of socialism by taking a stand against the antifascist people's war. They trailed behind the bourgeois leaders of the Congress and the League who were gambling on the Japan-

ese invasion while seeking at the same time a compromise with imperialism. It was the Communist Party alone which stood out boldly for a real proletarian line, a line which was in the interests of the working class and the toiling millions throughout the world as well as in India itself.

In those days there were many people who foretold the complete collapse of the Communist Party, now that it was taking a line which was against the line which the national movement and its leaders were taking.

They were proved false prophets. Fighting against the stream, the Communist Party in those days stood boldly by the people, campaigned against the repression launched by imperialism against the national movement, rallied the peasant masses to campaign against famine, to fight the blackmarkets. It stood by the workingclass and the toiling masses in those difficult days of war.

Thus it was that despite slander and opposition from the right and left leaders of the national movement, the Communist Party, though it lost some of its masses, grew in strength in the country as a whole. Its membership rose from 10,000 to 50,000, its organised strength among the working class, peasants and the students increased in the same measure.

After the end of the war the bourgeois leaders of the Congress sought to turn the people against the communists. "We made the August revolution while the Communist Party was on the other side"—this was the keynote of the slander campaign which the Congress leaders ran against the communists, inciting and provoking attacks on the Communist Party offices and presses and even against individual members of the party.

But the real face of the national leaders was unmasked when the post-war revolutionary upsurge broke out towards the end of 1945. Terrified by the rising tempo of the revolutionary activity of the masses, the leaders of the Congress and the League took the path of compromise and collaboration with imperialism.

While the Communist Party was participating in the

heroic struggles in connection with the release of the INA prisoners and later on fully supported the great revolts of the Royal Indian Navy and the armed forces, the Congress leaders were denouncing the fighting masses as goondas and turning their backs on the struggle of the masses.

While the Communist Party was forging in these as well as in the rising struggles of the peasants and workers, unity and solidarity of hindus and muslims, touchable and untouchable toiling people, the Congress and the League leaders were pursuing the path of compromise with imperialism and of disruption of people's struggles, a path which led to communal carnage of an unprecedented magnitude and which ultimately culminated in the partition of the country, enabling imperialism to exploit this division to disrupt the struggle of the common people for a democratic revolution and real independence.

Since the very beginning of the postwar revolutionary upsurge, the Communist Party has been participating in and leading the battles of the masses.

It was the communists who led the wave of protest strikes which greeted the glorious revolt of the RIN ratings against imperialist arrogance and oppression.

It was the Communist Party which led the big strike struggles both in the railways and the textile industry which broke out in the years 1946 and 1947.

### *Tebhaga and Other Struggles*

In these very years the Communist Party led the great struggle of lakhs of Bengali peasants for tebhaga which spread over more than eleven districts of Bengal.

The party also led the great struggle of a lakh of Warli peasants against serfdom and is today leading the magnificent partisan warfare of the peasants of Telangana against the nizam's autocracy.

While the bourgeois leaders of the Congress and the League, pursuing the policy of collaboration with imperialism and of rivalry and competition against each other,

with the aim of grabbing markets and a share of state power, created conditions that led to the most ghastly communal riots that India had ever seen and while even some leaders of the left parties too were swept into this communal frenzy, it was the Communist Party alone which stood firm by the principles of proletarian unity, by the cause of the solidarity of the toiling and common people in the struggle against exploitation.

In the riots of 1946 and 1947 it was the Communist Party which came forward boldly denouncing imperialism as the archincendiary of riots.

It was the Communist Party which nailed down the main responsibility of the compromising and riotmongering policy of the Congress and the League leaders for these riots and strove hard, despite difficulties, to maintain the unity of hindu and muslim toiling people.

In 1946 it was the communists who created Hasanabad, the flaming example of hindu-muslim unity right in the midst of the riot-inflamed countryside of Bengal.

In 1947, in the midst of the post-partition riots in the Punjab, it was the Communist Party members who displayed rare heroism in facing death in their efforts to save members of the minority community from the hands of the murderous riot mobs.

In Calcutta and Delhi it was the communists who were in the forefront of the heroic demonstrations which were organised to fight back the riots.

As the spearhead and the leader of the principal struggles of the masses, of workers, peasants and students, it was the Communist Party of India which became the main target of repression at the hands of the Congress ministries in the year 1946-47.

Communist workers and rank-and-file members have been shot dead by policemen, as at Amalner and at Golden Rock; their following has been harassed and tortured, as in Malabar at the hands of the Malabar special police; their workers have been set upon and murdered by goondas, as in Coimbatore: their following has been put in jail

in thousands, as in the tebhaga battle. But the communists and the masses led by the Communist Party have not faltered or wavered in the face of the heaviest repression.

They have fought back repression in the spirit of the martyrs of Amalner and Golden Rock, in the spirit of the students who defied the ban on their conference in Bombay.

Repression has not crushed the communists; on the contrary, the unfaltering fight of the communists against repression is rousing the anger of the common people against repression by the so-called popular ministries and is leading more and more to the isolation of these ministries.

Thus through the years of the postwar struggle, the Communist Party has emerged all the stronger, breaking down the walls of slander and provocation, leading mass struggles, fighting back riots, and advancing forward despite the repression of popular ministries.

Though the party was leading these battles, still it continued to vacillate in its policy and line. It had not made a completely new evaluation of the forces in the postwar period, of the role of the national bourgeoisie, of the new tactics of imperialism, and of the strength of the popular forces.

By August 1946 the party came to a correct understanding of the new upsurge, began to lead mass struggles decisively and had also evolved correct political slogans. It is especially after the August resolution that the party led the great workingclass and peasant battles of the recent past.

But failing to understand the treacherous role of the national leadership, the party was again derailed into reformism, especially because of a strong reformist trend of certain members of the central committee.

The vacillations of the party culminated a year later in the Mountbatten resolution, which looked upon the Mountbatten award as an advance, instead of a new offensive of imperialism which considered the national government as a strategic weapon of advancing towards national



freedom, instead of as a government of compromise and surrender.

This led the party to come out with slogans like 'All support to Nehru government', when that government was attacking the masses and betraying the cause of Indian freedom. It made the party come out with the opportunist slogan of a united front between the government and the people, when the government was suppressing the people in the interests of big business.

This developed illusions about national reconstruction—and cooperation for it with the government of the national bourgeoisie, when the latter was daily attacking the living standards of the workers.

With this outlook the party got completely confounded and confused by the wave of riots and mass massacres following partition and began to trail completely behind Nehru and Gandhiji.

In short, the Mountbatten resolution tied the party to the treacherous policies of the bourgeoisie.

### *Break with Reformism*

In December 1947, the central committee of the Communist Party met and reviewed the whole situation. It adopted a statement of policy and a document formulating the policy of revolutionary defence against the collaborationist policy of the bourgeois leaders, of consolidating the struggle of the masses for building the democratic front for the achievement of democratic revolution and a people's government.

The December meeting made a break with the reformist understanding of the previous resolution; correctly characterising the national government as a government of collaboration and surrender, it raised the question of political power and called on the working class to rebuild people's unity through a democratic front—so that power is really secured by the toiling millions.

It shed all illusions about the national bourgeoisie and declared that the national bourgeoisie had ceased to play an oppositional role, and that the Congress high command which represented it had gone over to the camp of imperialism.

On the basis of this it declared that there should be no illusion that the Congress as an organisation would be in the democratic front, and that the struggle for real freedom and democracy would have to be waged in opposition to the collaborationist policy of the Congress leaders.

The central committee appointed a drafting commission to prepare a draft political thesis on the basis of these documents to be placed before the second party congress. Meanwhile the statement of policy and the document adopted by the central committee were issued to the entire party ranks as a basis for discussing the general line of the party in the provincial conferences and in their units.

For two months, January and February, the entire party ranks were eagerly discussing these documents, selfcritically reviewing their own past work and the work of their higher committees. The delegates to the congress were in the majority of cases elected in provincial conferences in which discussions had taken place over these documents.

The delegates who came to the congress were mostly mass leaders who had their finger tips on the pulse of the rising struggle of the masses. They knew what the hesitations and vacillations of the foregoing period had meant for their work among the masses. They came to the congress with the firm determination to end the vacillations and mistakes of the past and to make a collective effort to evolve a correct revolutionary line.

Their own experience of mass struggles, of the deepening crisis on every front, of the growing disillusionment of the masses with the policy of the Congress leaders had made them impatient of vacillations and hesitations and vigilant of mistakes.

**REPORT ON POLITICAL THESIS**

There were three main reports delivered at the congress on behalf of the central committee.

The first was a report on the draft political thesis by B. T. Ranadive.

The second was a report on Pakistan presented by Bhowani Sen in connection with the resolution to restrict the organisation of the Communist Party to the boundaries of the Indian union, leaving the Communist Party organisations in the territories separated and reconstituted as Pakistan state free to organise a separate communist party.

The third report presented by B. T. Ranadive was a self-critical review of the policies of the party during the last five years.

These reports were presented before the congress one after another, and the discussion on them started only after all of them had already been placed before the delegates. About 100 delegates participated in the discussion, which was keen and lively and contributed greatly to forging a united understanding and towards improving the draft placed before the congress.

In his opening report on the draft political thesis, Ranadive pointedly dealt with those key issues over which the thesis was making a sharp break with the old understanding.

*International Situation*

Dealing with the salient features of the new international situation, Ranadive pointed out that there was no Chinese wall between the international situation and our national situation. Many of our mistakes in the past had arisen from an incorrect understanding of the new world situation which had come into existence after the end of the antifascist war. They had arisen because we had failed to understand the significance of the new features of the present international situation for our national movement.

Communists were the first to say that as a result of the military defeat of the fascist-imperialists, the forces of world imperialism would be weakened immensely and the forces of the working class and the people fighting for democracy and socialism would emerge stronger.

With the end of the war the correlation of forces between the world of socialism and the world of capitalism has changed. The balance has shifted in favour of the world of socialism and against the world of capitalism. This changed correlation of forces naturally found expression in the tremendous strengthening of the forces of socialism and democracy.

"The Soviet Union emerges as a strong power, a strong state and a strong economic unit", declared Ranadive. "Along with that, the east-European countries have broken out of the imperialist orbit and are marching towards socialism.

"In the great continent of Asia, the Chinese liberation army is marching ahead victoriously, and throughout the colonies, colonial revolts are developing rapidly.

"In the central and east-European countries, the communist parties, which were once hunted parties have come to the forefront as the biggest parties, showing the maturity of the working class, in the struggle against reaction and for a people's democracy and for socialism."

This changed correlation of forces expressed itself also in the weakness of world imperialism. It is seen in the desperate efforts the Anglo-American imperialists are making to save the capitalist social order from its impending doom.

It is seen in the desperate offensive which the Anglo-American imperialists have launched to rally together all reactionary forces in every country, to stop the onrushing tide of social revolution, to prepare the ground to unleash a new world war for domination over all peoples and for the destruction of the Soviet Union and the people's democracies.

This new correlation of forces is expressing itself in the aggravated crisis of the colonial system; it is expressing itself in the rise of powerful movements of national and social liberation in the colonies and dependencies of imperialism.

### *Two Camps*

In every country, including the colonies, the bourgeoisie and their servitors, the social-democrats, menaced by the revolution, are lining up with the Anglo-American imperialists in their fight against the forces of democracy and socialism. In every country, including the colonies, the bourgeoisie and its henchmen are taking the position of subservience to the Anglo-American imperialist masters and against the interests of national independence and democracy of their own countries.

This new correlation of forces expresses itself in the formation of two camps, which face each other in irreconcilable conflict—the camp of Anglo-American imperialism and its reactionary allies, and the camp of all the peoples, fighting for their national independence and democracy, led by the Soviet Union and the people's democracies.

It is this situation, this changed correlation of forces, in which the bourgeoisie in each country is openly joining the camp of reaction and imperialism, and openly betraying the cause of national independence and democracy of its own country and people, which places upon the proletariat in each country the responsibility to come forward as the most resolute champion of the fight for national independence and people's democracy.

It is this situation, this changed correlation of forces, in which the bourgeoisie of all countries is lining up under the leadership of Anglo-American imperialism in its drive for world domination and for the unleashing of a new world war, which places upon the proletariat of all countries the historic responsibility of building a solid front

to consolidate the camp of anti-imperialism, democracy and socialism and to hurl back the offensive of reaction and imperialism.

Defining the fight for a people's democracy, Ranadive made points which can be summarised in the following manner:

The struggle for people's democracy is a democratic fight of the millions, the masses of workers, peasants and the toiling intelligentsia against reaction, against imperialism, a fight which does not remain confined to what is commonly known as bourgeois democracy, but gets intertwined with the fight for socialism.

People's democracy represents the changed correlation of forces in every country where conditions are mature for the isolation of the collaborating bourgeoisie in such a way that the struggle for democracy and the struggle for socialism get intertwined in a single revolutionary struggle.

People's democracy represents a new kind of state, based on the alliance of workers, peasants and progressive intelligentsia, under the leadership of the proletariat. It goes ahead to smash landlordism and the power of capital, so that the conditions are created not only for the flowering of real democracy, but also for the building of socialism.

People's democracy is really the fight for rallying the majority of the people against capitalism, against the rule of reaction, and for the freedom of every country.

This is the revolutionary meaning of the struggle for people's democracy, in the course of which the bourgeoisie all over the world finds it more and more difficult to gather any appreciable mass force behind it, because in the course of the deepening crisis of capitalism, it exposes itself more and more nakedly before the common toiling millions as the ally of Anglo-American imperialism.

The fight for people's democracy in every country must therefore be conducted also against its own collaborating bourgeoisie.

It is a part of the worldwide fight of the world proletariat and the camp of anti-imperialism, democracy, peace and socialism against the menace of Anglo-American imperialism trying to dominate the world and to unleash a new world war.

It is necessary to understand the salient features of the new world situation:

(1) As against the apparent strength of the Anglo-American imperialist colossus which is seeking to bolster up reaction in every country, it is necessary to realise that the strength of the camp of anti-imperialism, democracy and socialism is far greater.

That strength is expressed in the increased might of the socialist Soviet Union, in the stability and strength of the people's democracies in eastern Europe, which are advancing firmly towards socialism; it is expressed in the giant victorious strides with which the liberation army of the Chinese people is marching forward towards creating a real people's democracy for the whole of China and thus opening a new and big breach in the wall of world imperialism.

It is expressed in the new revolutionary movements which are growing in the colonies like India and Burma, Indonesia and Vietnam—movements led by the proletariat, which are challenging the efforts to perpetuate their colonial status and the basis for imperialist-bourgeois collaboration.

There is not the slightest doubt that it is these forces of anti-imperialism, democracy and socialism which are today potentially stronger than the might of Anglo-American imperialism, which is being corroded from within by the deepening crisis of capitalism.

(2) In every country the bourgeoisie and its henchmen have gone over to the camp of Anglo-American imperialism. This creates conditions for unmasking them before the people as enemies of national independence and democracy; it creates conditions for the proletariat to emerge

as the champion of the fight for national independence and people's democracy.

In every country in different degrees conditions are maturing for the proletariat to come forward and lead the fight for people's democracy, for the power of the working class, in alliance with the other exploited classes, for the transition towards socialism.

If we get this understanding, then we will realise that what is happening in our country is an integral part of what is happening elsewhere, the crackup of the world imperialist system after the military defeat of fascism, a crackup of its economic system, which throws new and additional burdens on the shoulders of the masses and makes them more and more angry against the existing system, and thus creates conditions for the waging of a victorious fight for people's democracy and socialism.

In the context of this understanding of the world situation and the position of the world bourgeoisie, Ranadive referred to the fact that the past resolutions of the central committee of our party had not correctly placed the compromising and collaborationist role of the national bourgeois leaders.

Referring to the resolution of the central committee on the Mountbatten award, he said that though the resolution referred to the compromising role of the bourgeoisie, it did not nail down the compromising role of Nehru and Patel and therefore did not place before us the task of fighting and isolating their collaborationist policies. He pointed out that even in the resolution of the central committee of August 1946 this fact was absent.

### *Basis of Collaboration*

He stated that these resolutions had not sufficiently stressed the compromising and collaborationist role of the national bourgeoisie and the national leaders and had not emphasised the fact that both had crossed over to the camp of imperialism. This fact, he said, would be found



clearly and sharply nailed down in the present draft thesis.

He pointed out that we missed this big fact, which in its turn led to a series of reformist deviations, because of our failure to study the economic changes that had taken place in India during the course of the war.

"One of the basic things", he pointed out, "which happened in the course of the war and which has a profound bearing on the collaborationist role of the bourgeoisie, is that the process of war enriched the bourgeoisie, and there was a tremendous accumulation of capital in its hands for which it hoped to find an outlet through building industries, especially in collaboration with American imperialism.

"The economic basis of collaboration was laid through inflation, through fleecing of the people, through profiteering and blackmarketing, which led to the accumulation of wealth in the hands of the bourgeoisie, on the one hand, and to the intensification of poverty, starvation and misery among the common people, on the other" (Bengal famine).

Referring to the great postwar revolutionary upsurge, which also arose out of the deepening economic crisis as a result of the intensified exploitation of the war period, Ranadive pointed out:

"The bourgeoisie recognised the significance of the new upsurge and the danger that it represented to its own position and therefore turned its face decidedly against the upsurge and began calling the fighting people goondas. It was this fear of the rising upsurge also that turned the bourgeoisie towards collaboration."

Proceeding further Ranadive pointed out that we missed the significant fact that the great driving force behind the revolutionary upsurge of the masses was the deepening crisis of the colonial system.

"We did not make a correct analysis of the economic crisis, did not make every party member, every provincial committee member, every central committee member, understand that we were and are living in the midst of an

economic crisis of gigantic magnitude. Instead of this we accepted a large number of economic formulations made by bourgeois economists, and more and more forgot that the only solution of the crisis was through a change of the social order brought about by the fighting masses.

"It is because we missed all these that we are today putting the entire analysis of the crisis before the congress, because it is necessary to understand once again that ours is a colonial-agrarian country and the crisis cannot be solved without an agrarian revolution."

Explaining the real nature of the deepening economic crisis and the way in which the capitalists and the Congress leadership are seeking to solve it at the expense of the people, Ranadive said:

"There is no doubt that production is declining, but it is because the capitalists seek to retain high profits and high prices. In spite of the decline in production we will soon find that there are too many goods in the market; because the prices quoted are so high that they are beyond the reach of the ordinary man. In this sense this shortage of goods is only the reverse side of the process of impoverishment, of the onesided distribution of national income.

"The capitalists seek to propagate that the workers are responsible for this shortage of goods; and they demand stern action against them. While finding that they cannot continue to sell for long at the present prices and at the same time determined to keep their profits high, they demand reduction in labour costs—wage-reduction, etc.

"The cry of shortage of goods is only a preparatory cry to pass on the burdens of the crisis to the workers and the people; and on which conceals that the decline in production is brought about by the selfish struggle to maintain high profits—that it is part of the capitalist crisis itself."

Sharply negating the formulations made about the national government in the former central committee resolution, he said:

"We characterise here the national government as a government of national surrender, of collaborators, a government of compromise. Thus in place of our former wrong characterisation about the government as one of national advance with which we should have a joint front, we have now the characterisation that it is a government of national surrender and collaboration.

### *Central Slogan*

"The conclusion that follows from this is that the basic policy of the working class and its party must be one of opposition to this government, and this is what is sharply underlined in this thesis. We must therefore consistently and continuously unmask before the masses the compromising and collaborating face of this government.

"Our first task today must be to run an unceasing campaign to win the majority of the masses to our side; and it is this alone that will enable us to achieve our objective of replacing the present collaborationist government by a government representing the workers, peasants and other sections of the petty bourgeoisie. This forms the central slogan of our programme of the democratic front."

Referring to other illusions and halfway-house solutions, Ranadive said:

"There are some who still have illusions that if any left party joins this government, it will be a progressive act; we must however declare that no honest party can participate in this collaborationist government. Any left party that enters this government will be committing an act of treachery towards the toiling masses."

Explaining the slogan of the people's democratic front, he said that it was an alliance of the working class, the peasantry, the oppressed middle class and the intelligentsia.

"We visualise", he continued, "that as the front grows, we can marshal all people around the slogan of the democratic revolution, disillusion them about the present government and develop sufficient sanction behind the demand for a people's democratic state. The central question is the

question of power and we have answered that question by declaring that the working class will demand a people's democratic state."

Outlining the tasks of partial struggles on the various fronts, Ranadive sharply polemised against the old outlook of looking at partial struggles only as partial struggles for partial gains.

He pointed out that the imperialist-feudal-bourgeois order in India was collapsing and that the collaborationist bourgeoisie, despite its frantic efforts to sustain it and prop it up, will not be in a position to prevent it from collapsing and rebuild it.

On the contrary the policies which the Congress leaders and the government are following, the policy of propping up landlordism in a new way instead of abolishing it altogether, the policy of screening and protecting the feudal autocrats behind the veil of accession and mergers, the policy of aiding big business to act as tools of Anglo-American imperialists to place the ever-growing burdens on the heads of the workers and the common people—all these policies can only result in the further deepening of the crisis and transferring this burden on to the shoulders of the masses.

Hence it is necessary to realise that the period that has opened is not one of stable bourgeois development, despite the rosy pictures of national reconstruction which the hypocritical henchmen of the national bourgeoisie continue to paint. It is one of deepening crisis, of the disintegration of the imperialist-feudal order.

### *Democratic Front*

It is a period in which the central slogans of democratic revolution, namely, the abolition of landlordism without compensation and land to the tiller, nationalisation of industries, breaking the power of big business and workers' control, smashing the power of feudal autocracy, of jagirdars, nawabs, princelings, big and small, all these are on the immediate order of the day.

These slogans are realisable today and it is necessary that every partial struggle, whether it is of the workers or of the kisans or of the states' peoples against autocracy, has to be fought in the context of the immediate realisation of these slogans.

It is necessary to popularise in every partial struggle the central and basic slogans. The toiling masses should be inspired to advance towards the realisation of a people's democratic state based on the power of the working class allied with other oppressed classes.

On the issue of the states, Ranadive pointed out that it was necessary to make a complete break with the old conception of fighting for responsible government only, of considering accession, mergers and the like as progressive steps towards the elimination of feudal autocracy.

"On the question of the states", he pointed out, "we must take a correct stand of fighting for complete democracy, for the immediate final liquidation of the feudal order. We must not mislead the people by creating illusions about accession and about the mergers of various small states into a single state or of certain other small states into neighbouring provinces.

"We must clearly point out that all these are merely clever devices to protect and retain the feudal order. In fact all these devices are an expression of the collaborationist alliance that is being forged between the Congress leaders and the Congress governments on the one hand and the feudal autocrats on the other, an unholy alliance in the face of the rising tide of the struggle for the states' peoples for the complete liquidation of feudal autocracy.

"We must realise that the revolutionary struggle of the states' peoples today has to be carried on against the line-up between the Indian union government, manned by the Congress leaders, and the autocratic rulers and the compromising Praja Mandal leaders. This fight will have to be led by the working class and its party."

Concluding his report, Ranadive said:

"Let us not forget that despite our mistakes we have

great achievements to our credit. In the war as well as in the postwar period our party has grown as no other party, though had it not been for its mistakes, it would have developed even ten times stronger.

"Masses of people have fought for their demands, have fought glorious battles under the leadership of the party. Our party had the privilege of leading the biggest battles. Our party was at the head of the students' struggles. Everywhere people say that the one party which leads the battles of the masses is the Communist Party.

"Telangana is another big landmark in the history of struggles led under the leadership of our party. Here we took the struggle to new qualitative heights with exemplary organisation. Circles close to the nizam tremble before the name of Telangana. For Telangana today means communists and communists mean Telangana.

"No party in India can claim to have led so many battles in the postwar period as we have led.

"No party in India has to its credit struggles like that in Travancore, the glorious battle of Vayalar, the strike struggles of Coimbatore, Kanpur and Amalner, and lastly the agrarian struggle of Telangana.

"In the recent past our leadership hesitated and vacillated. But the masses under our leadership have fought continuously and that has raised the prestige of our party.

"Remember that we are a force that is feared by the existing ruling class. The fear is real because we lead the majority of the organised working class, the majority of the organised peasantry, the organised students. We are a force and we should not underestimate ourselves. If in the past two years, in spite of these mistakes we achieved all this, then without these mistakes we must go forward today ten times more swiftly than ever before in the history of our party and our people."

#### REPORT ON PAKISTAN

The next important report was made by Bhowani Sen on Pakistan. It was in the context of the question which had

arisen because of the partition of the country and the separation of the territories of Pakistan and their incorporation into a new state.

The question of confining the organisations of the Communist Party of India to the boundaries of the Indian union and leaving the Communist Party units in the separated territories of Pakistan free to form a separate communist party was before the congress for decision.

Bhowani Sen's report placed this question in the correct perspective, emphasising the fundamental unity of the communist movement throughout India.

At the outset Bhowani Sen raised the question of two opinions or trends in relation to the Indian union and Pakistan: one opinion or trend considered the Indian union to be progressive, while in contrast it considered Pakistan to be reactionary; while another opinion or trend considered Pakistan at least an advance towards muslim freedom from hindu domination. Bhowani Sen emphasised that we must make a fundamental departure from the old outlook and resolve this controversy in a scientific manner.

Both the Indian union and Pakistan, he declared, were dominated by reactionary capitalists and landlords, collaborating with imperialism. It was as wrong to think that the Indian union was progressive as to assert that Pakistan was an advance towards the so-called muslim freedom from hindu domination.

In reality there was no such thing as muslim freedom; neither was there any such thing as hindu domination. Did the hindu worker oppress the muslim worker? Did the hindu peasant dominate over the muslim peasant? On the contrary they were one and all oppressed by the same people, imperialists and their landlord-capitalist allies.

The Muslim League propagated the false theory of hindu domination in order to conceal the real character, real purpose and real motive for partition, which was one of consolidating and safeguarding muslim vested interests against the richer and more powerful hindu competitors. They diverted the genuine indignation of the oppressed muslim

masses against imperialism and the vested interests into communal channels and thus played the game of imperialism which wanted to partition the country and keep both muslims and hindus enslaved.

From this central point, Bhowani Sen emphasised the fundamental unity of the communist movements both in India and Pakistan; they are faced with the same task of radically changing the existing order and building up really free independent people's democratic states in their respective countries.

From this it follows that henceforth the most important task that is before the party is the unity of the democratic movements in Pakistan as well as in the Indian union. It is this unity which guarantees the liquidation of the existing order in a revolutionary manner.

In the course of his report, Bhowani Sen raised and answered three questions:

- (1) What factors led to the formation of Pakistan?
- (2) What is the character of the Pakistan state and the Pakistan government?
- (3) What is the future of Pakistan?

Referring to the future of Pakistan, he pointed out that imperialism had not quit Pakistan, nor had anything like muslim freedom or any freedom whatsoever been established there. Imperialism is very much present in Pakistan; its representatives are the real men who rule behind the scene.

He exposed the hollowness of the rumour which is being spread by congressmen in the Indian union that Pakistan is going to collapse because of its economic weakness. Imperialism has not created Pakistan so that it may collapse. Out of these economic difficulties what is coming is not the automatic collapse of Pakistan but the further strengthening of the imperialist-landlord-bourgeois ruling clique. There is already talk of a military pact being under preparation and Jinnah has openly declared that Pakistan will remain within the British commonwealth.



*Future of Pakistan*

Bhowani Sen pointed out that unless the people in Pakistan stand up and fight the policies of the government and of the League leaders, unmask and defeat them, their freedom cannot be realised. The future of Pakistan will be determined by the democratic movement of the people, and the unity of the two democratic movements of India and Pakistan will together free both India and Pakistan from imperialist bondage.

Polemising against the theory of automatic collapse of Pakistan, Bhowani Sen said that we must take a bold stand against this sort of demagoguery and expose the policy of the Congress leaders, who are putting across this propaganda in order to befool the Indian people and keep them in permanent conflict and hostility with the people of Pakistan.

Answering the three questions, Bhowani Sen proceeded to show how imperialism was creating and maintaining a permanent state of war between India and Pakistan. He pointed out that for the purpose of maintaining strained relations between the two dominions, imperialism uses all its agents, spreads lies, both among hindus and muslims, to ensure permanent hostility between these two, so that it may be able to strengthen its domination and its authority.

"Thus lies have been multiplied like inflation of money. When there is inflation of money, the value of the coin decreases. In the same way the effectiveness of these lies decreases."

Bhowani Sen referred to the question of Kashmir and how imperialism was utilising it to create an open clash between the two dominions.

He pointedly referred to the mistake committed by the party in connection with Kashmir. He exposed how we made the people believe that the march of the Indian army into Kashmir was the march of the democratic forces

for the purpose of freeing the muslim peasant from the raiders. But what has been the result?

The result was that after such a long period of warfare, Kashmir did not become free but was going to be under Anglo-American domination.

This mistake, Bhowani Sen pointed out, arose because we thought the Indian union to be progressive and Pakistan reactionary. Out of this followed the logical conclusion that since the Indian union is progressive, accession to the Indian union is a progressive step.

But what has happened? Princedom remains, landlords are still there, and it is the army of the Indian union which dominates over the toiling people of Kashmir. Therefore we have to understand this question of accession and look at it from a new angle.

In fact this posing of the question as one of accession or no accession is the weapon with which reaction seeks to divert the popular energy from the revolutionary direction.

"We must not enter this trap", said Bhowani Sen, "and for us there is no question of accession. Such accession will only lead to the forging of an alliance between the government of the Indian union or of Pakistan with princely autocracy.

"There can be no question of accession before the complete victorious democratic revolution has been achieved, before the toiling peasants have got land, before princely autocracy is really liquidated and power has passed into the hands of the masses. It is after all this that the victorious people of the states will decide their relations to the Indian union or Pakistan."

"The real way out", said Bhowani Sen, "is the way of the heroic people of Telangana. The real solution to this question is on the field of battle. The heroic people of Telangana, the great example of their fight against autocracy, not only show what will happen inside the states, but also what will be the real future of India and Pakistan.

That is the way the victorious people must march to freedom and real democracy.

"Therefore we must respect this battle, this struggle inside Hyderabad, of the people of Hyderabad, as a struggle of a new type. We must be proud to say that here at least there is the force that will achieve Indian liberation.

"Kashmir has gone to Uno. And the fate of Kashmir lies at the feet of imperialism. But something else is happening in Hyderabad. The difference between Hyderabad and Kashmir is the difference between our old understanding and our new understanding."

Emphasising the point further to the loud acclamation of the delegates, Bhowani Sen said:

"In Hyderabad, in 2000 villages the writ of the nizam's administration has ceased to run, people's volunteers defend people's rule. In 2000 villages people's democracy has been established. This is the difference between Kashmir and Hyderabad.

"The question is whether the people will go the Hyderabad way or the Kashmir way; and our duty is to make the people go the Hyderabad way. If we can create this spirit of revolution among the masses, among the toiling people, we shall find reaction collapsing like a house of cards."

In the latter part of his report, Bhowani Sen outlined the programme and tasks of the democratic front in Pakistan and showed how they were exactly similar to those of the democratic front in India, thus once again emphasising the fundamental unity and solidarity of the movement for independence and people's democracy in both the states.

#### REPORT ON REFORMIST DEVIATION

The next important report placed before the Congress was the one on reformist deviation, introduced by B. T. Ranadive. The delegates who had come with the firm determination to forge a new revolutionary line also want-

ed to be clear about the mistakes of their own as well as of the leaders, for without a clear understanding of the past mistakes there could be no firm understanding of the new revolutionary line, nor could there be any guarantee against future mistakes.

Ranadive's speech on this report was a sharp and clear exposition of the reformist deviations and vacillations displayed by the old central committee in the execution of the otherwise correct line pursued by the party. The review generally covered the period between the two congresses of the party.

In regard to the line adopted by the party in the period of the antifascist people's war, Ranadive emphasised its fundamental correctness and the achievements which the party had been able to make because it adopted fundamentally correct proletarian slogans in that period.

He pointed out that if the Communist Party had followed in the wake of other bourgeois parties and had gone in for a fullscale opposition to the antifascist people's war, with all its organised strength among the working class and the peasantry, it would have spelt a veritable disaster for the whole country.

By holding firm the correct proletarian line the Communist Party not only remained true to the banner of proletarian internationalism, not only strengthened its bases among the workers and peasants, but also saved the country from what could have been a veritable disaster.

The mistakes in that period arose from a wrong understanding that the military defeat of fascism would automatically lead to the liquidation and elimination of imperialism itself and as such to the automatic liberation of all peoples.

This wrong understanding which was part of the analysis given in *Forward to Freedom* underestimated the intrigues and sabotage that the imperialists were carrying out in the people's camp.

The mistaken theory that imperialism was a prisoner in the people's camp made us forget the fact that impe-

rialism continued to function in India even in the period of the antifascist-people's war, strengthening at every step the imperialist-feudal economy and its own role, even at the cost of sabotaging the war against fascist aggression.

This total underestimation of the role of imperialism in the period of the people's war made us lose sight of the task of exposing imperialism and fighting it within the framework of support for the antifascist war.

For instance, in connection with the food crisis and the Bengal famine we correctly exposed the role of the hoarders and blackmarketeers but forgot to expose the role of imperialism, whose policy of inflation and bribing the Indian bourgeoisie and transferring the burden of the war on to the shoulders of the people was actually the root cause of the food crisis as well as the disastrous Bengal famine.

Similarly, while we were quite correct in organising the peasant effort to grow more food, we tended to forget that the main fight against the imperialist-feudal agrarian structure should not be slackened.

Again we were right in preventing sabotage in production and avoiding strikes as far as it was consistent with the defence of the living conditions of the working class, but it was necessary for us to see that it was not possible to raise or organise production as long as production remained in the hands of profiteering capitalists and an imperialist government for whom profits and not interests of the antifascist war constituted the main guiding factor.

It was not only in connection with the attitude to imperialism, it was pointed out, but, in connection with the understanding of the day-to-day developments of the war that a number of mistakes were committed. We ignored changes in the military situation developing during the course of war, changes which would have enabled us to adjust our strategy to suit new conditions.

With the battle of Stalingrad, for instance, and the turn in the tide of war, as the defeat of fascism became certain,

we could have adopted supple tactics in relation to the struggle against imperialism in preparation for the post-war revolutionary upsurge, increasingly marshalling and unleashing the forces of struggle as the war situation improved, applying extreme pressure, both economic and political, and creating a serious situation for imperialism.

We were right in those days in demanding the release of national leaders and raising the slogan of national government for national defence, but in fighting for these slogans we trailed too much behind the national bourgeois leaders, instead of taking an independent proletarian stand. We overrated the supposed antifascism of the bourgeois leaders and did not sufficiently realise and expose their opportunist role and gambling policy in relation to the Japanese invasion.

Thus the two reformist deviations of this period were: (a) that the edge of our fight against imperialism was dulled; and (b) that we began to trail behind the bourgeoisie instead of exposing it and following an independent policy.

This expressed itself in this that the left groups and parties which were only carrying out the policy of the opportunist bourgeois leaders were attacked even more severely by us than the national leaders, calling the left groups 'fifth column' and agents of the fascist powers.

This also expressed itself very sharply on the question of the application of the slogan of selfdetermination of nationalities to the hindu-muslim question.

Undoubtedly the main slogan raised by the party that the hindu-muslim question was the distorted expression of the existence of various nationalities in India was fundamentally sound. We were quite correct when we nailed down the Congress opposition to selfdetermination of nationalities and we correctly exposed and fought the Congress leaders for their refusal to take their stand on that principle in order to build a joint front against imperialism.

But we did not ask the bourgeois-landlord leaders of the Muslim League as to where they stood in relation to

the struggle of the masses against imperialism. On the contrary, we often applied the principle of selfdetermination in a manner which helped the separatist demand of the Muslim League for Pakistan.

This serious deviation arose mainly because in those days we were trailing behind the bourgeois leaders of both the Congress and the League and had illusions that the unity of the hindus and muslims and of the Congress and the League could be achieved by the bourgeois leaders themselves. It was because of these illusions that we busied ourselves in working out detailed 'practical' solutions to suit the separatist demand of the League leaders.

We did not see that the bourgeois leaders of both the Congress and the League, which were pursuing opportunist and compromising policies vis-a-vis fascism and imperialism, could not be united for a real antifascist, anti-imperialist stand.

We forgot the fundamental Leninist teaching that the unity of the people of different nationalities, communities, etc., can be achieved only by the proletariat by bringing the toiling and common people of both together in the common fight against imperialism and reaction, only by simultaneously exposing the demand of the dominating and separatist bourgeoisie, only by firmly standing for the right of selfdetermination of nationalities which could be really implemented by the people in the context of the achievement of democratic revolution.

It was these two reformist deviations of the war period, namely, the underestimation of the role of imperialism, and the trailing behind the bourgeois leaders and the faith in their antifascist and anti-imperialist bona fides, which were the root cause of the serious reformist deviations which we committed in the postwar period.

The result was that when the war ended we were not quick enough to see the new rising postwar revolutionary upsurge, nor did we see the changed correlation of forces in which imperialism manaced by the rising revolutionary

tide began to seek a new social basis in the colonies, namely, the collaborationist bourgeoisie, in order to perpetuate its domination over the colonial people.

Instead there was a tendency to fall a prey to reformist theories about peaceful development towards independence and socialism, and to abjure struggle.

Our ranks began instinctively to lead the upsurge from about the end of 1945, but it was only in July-August 1946 that the central committee was able to see the existence of the revolutionary upsurge and work out the main slogans of developing the partial struggles for the achievement of the democratic revolution and for the seizure of power by the people.

The central committee resolution of August 1946 was a great turningpoint. It gave the line clear to our ranks to lead the great strike battles on the railways and the textiles, to head the great struggles of the peasants for *tebhaga* in Bengal and similar struggles in UP and Bihar which enabled our comrades to unleash revolutionary struggles against the feudal autocracy in Travancore and against the autocracy of the *nizam* in Hyderabad.

Though the August resolution gave our party a correct line to head the struggles, there were many comrades who thought that it was a left-sectarian resolution. It is from this time that there came into existence two trends inside the central committee. There was a trend inside the central committee which thought that the August resolution was left-sectarian. In reality the fault of the August resolution was that it suffered from a right-reformist deviation; for, though the August resolution gave a clear call for heading the struggles, though it spoke of the compromising policies of the Congress and League leaders, it still left plenty of room for illusions about the oppositional role of the national bourgeois leaders.

Its real failing was that it failed to characterise sharply the collaborationist role of the bourgeois leaders of both the Congress and League which had become quite apparent after the formation of the interim government, in



which both the Congress and the League leaders were participating.

After August 1946 came the bloody riots in Calcutta, Noakhali and Bihar. Towards the end of the year came the repression on the Communist Party in the south; about 100 leading communists were jailed without trial.

The imperialist-bourgeois combine had opened its offensive against the rising upsurge. In the face of this offensive, those in the central committee who had originally opposed the August resolution as left-sectarian began now to resile and turn towards a right-reformist repudiation of the resolution.

The formulation that the interim government was a government of compromise and surrender was thrown overboard. A sharp criticism of the Congress ministries which were suppressing the workers' and peasants' struggles as agents of vested interests was condemned as incorrect. They were to be given a clean alibi while only the bureaucracy which was in fact doing their bidding was to be attacked.

The great struggles of the working class of Travancore which culminated in the heroic resistance of Vayalar and Punnapra battles, the dogged struggle of the textile workers of Coimbatore in the teeth of murderous goonda attacks, the revolt of the Warlis, all these were dubbed as vanguardist actions that had provoked ministerial and police repression and therefore were to be discouraged.

There was a tendency to line up behind the hypocritical bourgeois slogan of national reconstruction and of minimising strikes while ignoring the brutal offensive which the capitalists had opened against the living standards of the working class. There was even a tendency to think in terms of agreeing to the treacherous slogan of industrial truce.

In the face of the riots of 1946 and 1947 there was a tendency to line up behind Gandhiji and Nehru instead of exposing their policy which was itself playing into the hands of the imperialist-feudal riotmongers and often even

directly inciting riots. There was a servile throwing of bouquets to the bourgeois leaders like Gandhiji and Nehru in the name of fighting communal reaction.

Such was the backsliding and retreat noticeable within the ranks of the central committee which came in the face of the offensive of reaction, namely, communal riots and repression. It was advocated mainly by P. C. Joshi, representing the reformist trend inside the central committee. Vacillations and reformism of the majority of the members of the central committee reached their culmination in the June (1947) meeting of the central committee on the discussions on the Mountbatten award. Every amendment which sought to put down that the Mountbatten award was a concession to the national bourgeoisie and that the national bourgeois leadership was striking a deal against the interests of the people was negated or watered down, and it was asserted that the Mountbatten award was a concession to the national movement and the Indian people. After the defeat of these amendments the resolution was adopted without opposition.

For a time nobody saw the enormity of the reformist deviation involved in that resolution. To cover up the greatest betrayal of revolution, to screen the treacherous deal it had struck with imperialism, the bourgeois leaders raised the hope of 'freedom won' through huge celebrations throughout the country.

We were ourselves taken in by this. When the ghastly postpartition riots began in the Punjab and Delhi, we did not see them as the inevitable nemesis of the treacherous policy of collaboration with imperialism and its feudal allies which the Congress leadership itself was pursuing. Instead of exposing that policy, we lined up behind Gandhiji and Nehru and became supporters of the Nehru government. We built up a theory of differences between Sardar Patel on the one hand and Nehru and Gandhiji on the other to justify our uncritical support to Nehru and Gandhiji who in fact were pursuing the same policy as Sardar Patel.

We forgot the simple truth that the riot offensive of imperialism and its reactionary allies could not be defeated by lining up behind Gandhiji and Nehru and by glorifying their alleged 'fight' against communal reaction, but only by defeating the collaborationist policy of the entire bourgeois leadership and the government.

However in the months after 15 August, the majority of the central committee out of their own experience soon began to discover how far they had strayed from the correct revolutionary line which they had themselves begun to shape since August 1946.

In the meeting of the central committee which was held in December 1947, the majority of the committee took a firm stand and adopted the statement of policy and the document for the party congress on the basis of which the present draft political thesis was framed. Joshi, who accepted the statement of policy, had not yet made a complete turn and did not vote in the meeting for the document.

Summing up his report on reformist deviation, Ranadive said:

"Today, Joshi unreservedly accepts the political thesis, though he will certainly have to struggle very much to make a complete turn. For a time there was a serious situation inside our party. Reformism had invaded our ranks.

"It would be wrong to think that all mistakes were made by the central committee and the political bureau alone. There is no doubt that theirs was the main responsibility. But all, including the delegates assembled here, will have to turn the light inwards and selfcritically examine their own mistakes and their experience of the struggles.

"It is only through such bolshevik selfcriticism that we can, at this congress, unify the entire party behind the revolutionary line that we are formulating here and equip ourselves to advance into the coming battles with bold faith and firm confidence."

Ranadive's report which he took nearly 4½ hours to

deliver, was listened to in the midst of pindrop silence. In the course of his speech he had not only criticised Joshi, but had also nailed down the reformist deviations of every other political bureau and central committee member, including himself.

Next to speak after Ranadive had finished his report was Joshi himself. He fully supported Ranadive's report. He said that he himself was the leader and organiser of the right-reformist deviations inside the party and he was the last among the central committee members to accept the political line of the thesis. He mercilessly criticised his own mistakes and traced their ideological roots to the repudiation of Marxism and Leninism. He was overwhelmed with emotion as he made these points in the course of his one-hour speech.

#### DISCUSSION ON REPORTS

The discussions on these reports started only after all the reports were delivered and were notable for the initiative shown by the delegates, who together submitted a large number of amendments to the draft thesis directed at strengthening it, and the vigour and firmness with which they expressed their criticisms of the thesis and of the leadership.

Delegate after delegate came to the microphone and out of his own experience in daily struggle moved amendments or made suggestions for changes in the thesis; later, in the discussion on the report on the reformist deviations, there was the same frank and decisive vigour from numerous delegates explaining how reformist deviation had crept into the party and the enormous harm it had caused.

In the discussion on the draft thesis, particularly important was the sharp controversy on the question of the building of the democratic front. A considerable number of delegates declared that the formulations in the thesis concerning the democratic front were confused and capable of misinterpretation.

From Satyapal Dang came a clearcut speech asserting that in the thesis the conception of the democratic front as a coalition of left parties still remained and its real character as a "monolithic mass organisation" was not at all emphasised or underlined. He declared that it was very necessary to clear this point for two reasons.

First, to bring out the great responsibility that rests on the shoulders of the Communist Party for building the democratic front, and secondly, the need for a very severe struggle against the reactionary agents of the right in the left camp before any unity of the left can be achieved.

From Sunil Mukherjee, secretary of the Bihar provincial committee of the party, came equally strong criticism of the formulations of the thesis on this issue; and a number of comrades from different provinces also participated, supporting the criticisms made.

So also from the floor of the congress a number of delegates came out in sharp attacks on the weaknesses in the formulation of the concrete tasks and tactics of effecting the agrarian revolution, the main axis of the democratic revolution in our country.

Hanumantha Rao from Andhra said that we must have a clearcut analysis of the changes in the agrarian economy during the war years so that our comrades on the kisan front can understand who will be our allies and who our enemies in the struggle for agrarian revolution.

So also Indradeep Sinha from Bihar stressed the need for a more detailed up-to-date analysis of the class setup in the rural areas: in Bihar, Indradeep said, class differentiation of the peasantry during wartime had led to further pauperisation of the middle and poor peasantry and a considerable increase in the number of landless labourers; thus, today about 65 per cent of the rural population possessed less than 15 acres of land while 30 per cent were landless. This indicated that the agrarian revolution must be carried out by these 95 per cent against the remaining 5 per cent.

Indradeep stressed finally that the need for the communists to turn their face more firmly and decisively towards the agricultural proletariat who were the main lever for achieving the agrarian revolution was absent in the draft.

Other speakers stressed the insufficient treatment of the problem of the states' people's struggles and the tactics to be adopted on this front; women delegates so vigorously protested that the problems and tasks of communists on their front had been totally ignored in the thesis and this defect must be made up; a similar criticism came from the student delegates.

Right in the middle of this discussion came the strongest criticism of all, from a number of delegates from Telangana, pointing out that the revolutionary significance of the Telangana struggle for the present epoch of maturing democratic revolution in India was absent in the thesis.

This last criticism was no sooner made than accepted by the central committee and a delegate from Telangana was given the opportunity to move a special resolution on this question; in a stirring speech that evoked thunderous applause, this delegate detailed the mighty struggle being waged there, and appealed to the congress to understand its historic significance and support it with all their strength and vigour.

The congress responded to this moving appeal by adopting the resolution standing and amidst resounding cheers.

After 34 delegates had taken part in the discussion, Ranadive summed up the entire discussion.

Greeting the soundness of the criticisms made by many delegates, he declared in particular that the section on the democratic front would have to be changed and strengthened; regarding the criticisms made on the analysis of the agrarian crisis, the states' people's struggles, the tasks on the women's and students' fronts, Ranadive said that all these criticisms would be taken into account when the detailed analysis of the tasks on various fronts was made by the new central committee.

He finally asked that the thesis be adopted by the congress and the new central committee be charged with the task of amending the thesis for publication in the light of the discussion and the various amendments moved in the congress. This proposal was accepted unanimously amidst great applause.

There was a discussion on the proposal to confine the Communist Party organisation to the boundaries of the Indian Union and to enable the party units in the territories now separated as Pakistan to reconstitute themselves into a separate communist party organisation. Some comrades opposed the proposal, saying that by allowing a separate party to be formed in Pakistan we were tailing behind the separatists and accepting the imperialist partition itself.

In answering the discussion on this question, Sajjad Zaheer and Ranadive explained why a separate party was needed just in the interests of building a united communist movement in both the territories. This would enable us to fight more effectively, forge the unity of the communist movements in both the territories and defeat the disruptors especially in Pakistan.

The Communist Party organisation in Pakistan would be responsible for shaping and formulating the policy and leading the struggle in Pakistan in the same way as the party organisations in the Indian Union would be responsible for the same task in the Indian Union.

The joint action of the two parties, the coordination of their tasks in the common struggle against their respective governments representing the unholy alliance of imperialism, the bourgeoisie and feudal elements, would ensure the fundamental unity of the communist movement and a victory of the democratic revolution in both the countries.

After this explanation the resolution was put to vote and passed by an overwhelming majority.

After the discussion on the report on reformist deviation was over, the congress authorised the new central committee to draft a complete analysis of the reformist

deviation inside the party since 1939 and circulate it among party members.

The congress also adopted the amended constitution of the party as presented by Adhikari.

In the discussion on the amended draft, the main point discussed was in the preamble. The preamble as it appeared in the draft constitution submitted by the central committee contained no direct reference to the dictatorship of the proletariat. It stated the basic aim of the party as the "organising of the toiling masses in the struggle for the victorious anti-imperialist and agrarian revolution, for complete national independence, for the establishment of a people's democratic state led by the working class and the building of socialism according to the teachings of Marxism-Leninism".

On this issue there was a lively discussion. On behalf of the central committee it was made clear that a people's democratic state itself meant the dictatorship of the proletariat. It was also stated that in the present phase of the general crisis of capitalism after the second world war, a people's democratic state represents a specific form of class alliance led by the proletariat and becomes the instrument of completing not only the people's democratic revolution but also of carrying it forward to the achievement of socialism.

However several delegates who spoke on the question insisted that the references to the dictatorship of the proletariat must be explicitly there and declared that it was a fundamental principle of Marxism-Leninism and no ambiguity, no loopholes, for a possible reformist deviation must be left on this point.

Finally Bhowani Sen moved an amendment which added the words "for the realisation of the dictatorship of the proletariat" after the words "people's democratic state led by the working class".

This was accepted by Adhikari and then by the Congress as a whole.



## ELECTION OF NEW CENTRAL COMMITTEE

On the concluding day of the congress, the outgoing central committee placed a panel of the new central committee before the congress for adoption. It was an enlarged central committee which, while it included the majority of the old central committee members, also included nearly an equal number of new central committee members drawn from the main leaders of the mass struggles on different fronts from several provinces. It was a central committee truly representative of the great mass struggles that the party was leading on the various fronts throughout India.

There was a keen discussion from among the delegates on this panel. The delegates wanted to be assured that the new central committee would have a firm majority of such comrades who had fought for the new revolutionary line and who would ensure its correct execution in the future. The proposed central committee panel also included the name of Joshi.

In the course of the discussion, various amendments were moved to the panel and six more nominations were put up. The whole enlarged panel was then put to vote in order to elect the fixed number (31) for the central committee as decided by the congress.

In the course of this polling the entire panel proposed by the central committee, except the name of Joshi, was passed.<sup>1</sup> Though Joshi had accepted the political thesis and expressed his acceptance of it as well as of the report on reformist deviation before the congress, the voting

1. B. T. Ranadive (*general secretary*), Bhowani Sen, Somnath Lahiri, G. Adhikari, Ajoy Ghosh, N. K. Krishnan, C. Rajeswara Rao, M. Chandrasekhara Rao and S. S. Yusuf (*all members of the PB*); Ranen Sen, S. A. Dange, S. V. Ghate, D. S. Vaidya, P. Sundarayya, E.M.S. Namboodiripad, Arun Bose, S. G. Sardesai, Biswanath Mukherjee, P. Krishna Pillai, K. C. George, M. Basavapunniah, D. Venkateswara Rao, L. K. Oak, S. V. Parulekar, M. Kalvanasundaram, B. Srinivasa Rao, Muzaffar Ahmad, Biresh Misra, Mohd Ismail, Sunil Mukherjee and Ravi Narayana Reddy.

showed that the congress was of the opinion that he should not be in the new central committee because he had been the last of the old central committee members to accept the new line and had resisted it more strongly than anyone else.

Immediately after the election of the new central committee, the committee met during the congress itself and unanimously elected B. T. Ranadive as general secretary of the party. Ranadive's election was then announced to the congress and greeted with loud applause.

The election of a control commission<sup>2</sup> of three comrades, which will be responsible for dealing with all appeals over questions of discipline, and the adoption of the reports of the credential commission and the auditing commission (which approved the finances of the party) were then carried unanimously.

The entire party congress was keenly followed by a strong fraternal delegation which had come from the brother communist parties<sup>3</sup> of the various countries to specially attend the congress.

The second congress of the Communist Party of India thus marks a great turningpoint in the history of our party. It displayed a magnificent and united initiative of the rank-and-file delegates and the leadership of the party in evolving a revolutionary line, policy and tactics in a period of revolutionary crisis in India.

It has made a decisive break with the reformist deviation of party policy which continued for five years or more.

As a result of this congress the party emerges solidly united behind the new revolutionary line and behind the

2. S. S. Mirajkar, Radharaman Mitra and K.P.R. Gopalan.

3. Fraternal delegations came from Australia, Burma, Ceylon and Yugoslavia. Messages were received from the parties: Austria, Bulgaria, Canada, Caracas, Cyprus, Denmark, Finland, France, Great Britain, Holland, Hungary, Indonesia, Italy, Lebanon, Malaya, New Zealand, North Ireland, Norway, Palestine, Poland, South Africa, Switzerland, Syria and USSR.

new leadership, ready to go into action with firm faith in Marxism-Leninism and full confidence in the revolutionary spirit of the masses.

The party congress has handled with great firmness and collective wisdom a serious innerparty crisis. And that this serious innerparty crisis was solved with such firmness, discipline and united determination did honour to the entire rank-and-file delegates and leadership of the party, to their loyalty to the principles of Marxism and Leninism, to their loyalty to the principles of the communist party organisation and to the cause of the proletarian revolution.

## **IV**

# **Strategy and Tactics in the Struggle for People's Democratic Revolution in India**

### *Part I*

#### **I. THE ACCENTUATION OF THE ECONOMIC CRISIS, THE CONTINUANCE OF THE UPSURGE DESPITE REPRESSION, FULLY CONFIRMS THE BASIC ANALYSIS OF THE POLITICAL THESIS**

The eight months since the party congress have completely confirmed the analysis of political forces made by the second congress in its political resolution and the forecast of developments. The economic crisis has deepened with every month—till now the bourgeoisie and their government come face to face with it in the shape of ever-increasing inflation.

The monetary inflation, with whose aid the bourgeoisie hid the rapidly-developing crisis—which in people's mind is generally associated with falling prices, loss of wages and open unemployment of thousands—has now brought the economic structure on the verge of collapse. In inflation the bourgeoisie have found the most callous way—the invisible weapon—to fleece and rob the masses, inflict starvation on them, depreciate their labour, reduce their

Report made by the general secretary to the politbureau and the central committee. Adopted by the politbureau, December 1948. An abridged legal version was printed in *Communist*, No 4, June-July 1949.

wages and hurl the burdens of the crisis on the shoulders of the masses. The ever-increasing spiral of prices, with wages lagging behind, fleeces the worker of his labour and inflicts starvation wages on him and draws him to defend his standard of living and advance claims for permanent guarantee against starvation wages. The dearness allowance everywhere lags far behind the actual rise in the cost of living, and with every day the bourgeoisie seeks to widen the gap. The recent announcement of the government of India to virtually abolish the cheap grainshops, and retain them with only restricted items, is intended to subject the railway workers to the rising spiral of prices, bring about a still further worsening of their conditions, as it would remove the automatic protection against rise in prices afforded by the cheap grainshops and as under new terms of cash allowance.

The question of living wage, security of employment, housing, etc. all remain unsolved—sacrificed to the need of solving the crisis at the expense of the workers.

The inflation, which is expression of the crisis, hits the worker hard and draws him to challenge the government and his exploiters more strongly than ever.

The salaried employee is in the same position as the worker with his salaries static and the cost of living shooting higher and higher. His struggles break out again and again—as the direct result of the inflationary movement, which makes his conditions unbearable.

The inflationary movement ruins the middle peasant, it helps the process of expropriation of the poor peasant and makes the position of the agricultural workers insufferable. The doggedly-fought struggles of the agricultural workers, the tenacity with which the poor peasant fights to get back land from which he has been evicted and the militant and broad sweep of the agrarian struggles—speak of the unbearable conditions created by the rise in prices, which have added a new excruciating burden to the exploitation by landlords and other rural exploiting elements.

Only the landlords and rich peasants have reaped a good harvest out of the rising prices of food products, commercial crops and other agricultural products. The middle peasant, even when he has a surplus and is consequently able to cash it on the market and reap good prices, finds himself completely defrauded when he goes as a buyer to the market to purchase goods required for carrying on cultivation. The price of industrial goods required by him is so high that the little cash earned by him falls too short of his requirements as a purchaser and he runs into debts.

The inflationary crisis thus sharpens the class struggle in the countryside—especially the struggle between the agricultural workers and poor peasants on the one side and the landlords and rich peasants on the other. The ruin of the middle peasant compels him to join the struggle.

A new entrant in the struggle is the police employee of the government who was preceded by other government employees. The desperate situation created by inflationary crisis—the desperate effort to throw the burdens of the crisis on the people—is seen in the fact that the demands of policemen are growing and they are coming on strike. The other government employees too are being drawn in the fight though some of them are temporarily calmed down by petty concessions and show of strength.

Thus the overwhelming majority of population—workers, employees, government servants, policemen, agricultural workers, poor peasants, middle peasants—all are being drawn into the struggle through the direct effects of the inflationary movement.

But inflation is only the expression of the accentuated economic crisis and a weapon of throwing additional burdens on the masses—the burdens of the crisis—by defrauding people of their labour through monetary devices. The fact however that the government itself is forced to talk against inflation shows that this method of throwing additional burdens is no longer enough, that the ruling class requires more drastic measures than the existing dis-

tribution of national income secured through inflation, that it requires open and frontal attacks.

For inflation only expresses the accentuated stage of the crisis. It cannot remove the basic causes of the crisis which goes on getting deeper and deeper. These basic causes are seen in the total inability to produce more or keep to the old level of production within the framework of present relations of production. The relations of production have become a fetter on the growth of production and whatever the ruling class does, the basic problem cannot be solved.

This is seen in relation to the production of food and the production relations obtaining on land. The rapid deterioration of production on land, rapid impoverishment and expropriation of the producer from land as well as means of production, is a direct consequence of the feudal and capitalist relations in agriculture.

The war years have accentuated this process tenfold. By concentrating land and means of production in the hands of a fewer and fewer people, the agriculture of the small producer has been ruined. It has become impossible for land to be cultivated with efficiency by the small producer.

This is the basis of deficit and famine economy in the countryside—one which has now become a permanent feature. The old relations of production mean famine and destitution, expropriation of the producer from land—and must certainly drive millions to fight.

These basic causes of the agrarian crisis were sharply thrown into relief in the period since the second congress when the struggle of the poor peasants and agricultural workers broke into militant fights, when starting with the unhoarding of paddy in Kerala—a form immediately dictated by famine economy—it developed into clashes with police and hired gangs, into a miniature civil war.

The same collapse is to be seen on the industrial front, though here loose talk of importing capital goods etc. act

as a smokescreen—hiding the real nature of the crisis. In spite of all efforts, illegalisation of strikes, enforcing compulsory arbitration etc., production is on the decline. In so far as the decline is real—and not faked by capitalists due to their desire to evade taxation and sell in the black-market—it reveals, apart from such factors as breakdown of machinery etc., the limitations and restrictions imposed by capitalist profits. Firstly, the growth of strike struggles and the increasing demands of workers themselves show that the present conditions of production are coming in sharp conflict with the real producer and are a sign of the growing collapse of capitalist production.

Secondly, there is sabotage by capitalists, who do not want to increase production unless conditions are first ensured that the workers' wages are cut, that the increase in production would not result in fall in profits. This is already seen in connection with the question of three shifts in textiles. The millowners undertake to do it only if they are allowed to increase workload, distribute the number of workers in two shifts in three shifts—and thus increase workload per worker and reduce the cost of production which would ensure that even if the price of cloth falls, the capitalist would get enormous profits and which would also enable the capitalist to retrench the workers in the other shift when he finds it less profitable to employ them.

Increase in production without a corresponding guarantee of profits, of reduction of wages and increase in workload per worker frightens the capitalists, who see the looming shadows of the world crisis in the near future.

The capitalists seek to find a way out by importing the more up-to-date machinery—which would enable them to reduce employment and ensure profits by cutting down the wage-bill.

But the importation of capital goods from abroad, whether for renovating old industries or starting new ones, would not solve the problem. For the bourgeoisie will not



be able to solve the problem of the market—which because of the destitution of the peasantry is shrinking every day. The feudal and capitalist relations in agriculture act as fetters on the development of the productive forces—both in industry and agriculture. In relation to industry the agrarian relations hinder the development by narrowing down the home market—and hence the crisis continues despite all attempts to introduce new machinery etc. The bourgeoisie accentuates the crisis by maintaining old relations in agriculture, by depriving thousands of jobs, by cutting down wages—all of which narrow the market still further.

The accentuation of the crisis is already seen on the industrial front, though it is masked by blackmarket, high prices and inflation. Actually blackmarket and high prices are only means of depriving the common people of ordinary necessities—i.e. an expression of the way in which the burden of the crisis is passed on to the people. But it appears only in the nonclass form of shortage of goods—though the sufferers are only the exploited masses.

The accentuation is seen in high prices and in the denial of necessities and a decent standard of life to the producer, in the growing strike-struggles and demands of the workers, in the ferocious repression against the workers, in the insistent demand of the capitalists that production cannot proceed unless strikes are illegalised, wages are cut, workload is increased, thousands are rendered unemployed, and in the fact that with all this, the home market shrinks more and more.

The basic causes of the capitalist crisis, the impossibility to solve it remain and bring fresh collisions. The basic cause of the revolutionary upsurge thus gets accentuated at every step. Last eight months have conclusively proved it.

### *Revolutionary Upsurge Continues*

Out of this has arisen the great struggles of the last eight months—the struggles of workers and peasants, stu-

dents—struggles against which most barbarous methods of repression were used (Kerala, Andhra, Tamilnadu, West Bengal)—struggles which saw fascist terror against the toilers.

These struggles bear one special character. Not only are they born out of economic desperation; but they come in the wake of growing disillusionment with the Congress governments and are undertaken by toilers in direct defiance of the Congress governments. In them are being trained and steeled the new forces which are destined to overthrow the bourgeois rule. They reveal not only the rapid process of disillusionment, the rapid decline of the influence of the Congress, but also the growing desperate determination and militancy of the masses. They often develop into armed clashes in the face of terror. The terror—one-tenth of which would have formerly demoralised the fighters—now evokes only indignation and greater determination. How often have the leaders of the party, in recent struggles, underestimated the power of resistance of the masses under terror (Coimbatore, Kerala), and thinking that all resistance is broken, have been surprised by the masses who have refused to yield to terror and decided to continue resistance? All old standards of measuring the resistance power of the masses have gone to the winds. The masses are no longer the old masses, afraid of terror, always dragged back by the illusion of a secure life. They are the new masses on the eve of revolutionary battles—those who more and more realise that retreat is impossible and those who are developing a great confidence in the victory of their cause, because they have begun to see their real strength.

The partial struggle of the present period therefore become wide mass battles, armed conflicts—miniature civil wars—and when they are organised on a sufficiently big scale easily develop into political battles and throw up embryonic state forms (Telangana)—such is the logic of the situation. No Chinese wall today divides the two as it did divide during the period of stabilisation. The

terroristic repression teaches the masses to march forward and to challenge the state with all their power. It convinces them that without such a fight no struggle is possible, thus raising the struggle to a political plane—its stage being determined by the form and successful character of the resistance offered.

Naturally in these struggles, which the party had the great privilege of leading, the government concentrated all its terror and venom against us and the militant masses under our leadership. Rape, torture, burning of houses, murder, gangsterism, assault on women, merciless beating of well-known leaders—all these were systematically utilised to crush the struggle. The bourgeoisie seeks to rule the people with terror. The Congress government has revealed itself as the unashamed dictatorship of the bourgeoisie, maintained in defence of the feudal-imperialist-bourgeois alliance.

But despite this terror and the ruthless repression launched against the CPI which is rapidly assuming its role as the vanguard of the revolutionary forces, despite the terror launched against the masses—the bourgeoisie and the Congress governments have been compelled by the resistance of the masses to go slow; the Congress governments have found it increasingly difficult to solve the crisis at the expense of the people and hence had to adopt tactics of postponement, disruption, concessions etc. before a frontal offensive could be launched.

The glorious resistance offered by the workers of Coimbatore in the prolonged four-month textile strike; the recent strike of SI Railway staff; strikes like the militant sweepers' strike in Bombay; the doggedly-fought strike of Calcutta Port Trust workers and of other workers; the textile strikes of CP and Berar; the innumerable strikes all over India led by the unions of the AITUC, led by the CPI leaders, and often by unions belonging to socialist and other organisations—the dogged resistance offered to every new offensive, or the doggedness with which every new demand was fought—have all created fear of the

workingclass resistance in government quarters and made them realise that any sudden and allround offensive will meet with general resistance, and pass into even a general strike, bringing the whole structure crashing down.

The organised working class led by the CPI bars the way to an easy attack against the workers. It inspires the workers under the leadership of other parties. It is this fear of workingclass strength that has hitherto saved the railway, postal and other government workers from immediate unemployment, from retrenchment. If the government has hitherto succeeded in postponing the redress of their demands—thanks are mainly due to the treachery of reformists like Jayaprakash Narayan. The government similarly dared not sanction the textile millowners' proposal of three shifts by distributing the present number in three shifts because an attempt to do so in Ahmedabad led to a revolt on the part of textile workers against Nanda & Co last year.

In spite of the repeated demands of the capitalists for retrenchment and rationalisation, the government representatives, who have been mass leaders and who therefore were able to judge the temper of the masses correctly, would not rush into such measures. They resorted to disruption, softening of the workers through INTUC, disruption through the socialists, through protracted negotiations, postponement, through arbitration etc. so that they should have sufficient time to deal with the masses. They banned strikes, repressed strikes; at the same time they established arbitration tribunals to deflect the discontent in constitutional channels, to arm the reformists, and to be able to put off the strikes. In many cases they also granted wage increases to the workers, at the same time leaving the door open to the capitalists to launch rationalisation.

Till now the arbitration machinery itself has been used to give petty concessions, and to tire out the workers—making a struggle at the end difficult. But now even the limits of these petty concessions have been reached. What

the capitalists demand is not concessions to workers, but open frontal offensive; not deflection of discontent but open warfare. For this purpose arbitrary powers of the employers and police batons are necessary, not arbitration tribunals. And the government is rapidly moving towards that.

Meanwhile, compelled by the resistance of the organised workers, the government has been moving slowly. It is even now afraid to challenge the organised strength of the workers. It relies on disruption, propaganda and illegalisation of the CPI and help from the reformists who promise to retreat and betray at the first official offensive.

In the coming period therefore in the name of fighting inflation the government will embark upon wholesale offensive. It is heralded by the withdrawal of cheap grain facilities for railway workers. The government relies on ruthless repression and short and swift struggle. But the forces of the working class are strong and if they take an unbending attitude, the government offensive can be defeated. It is not at all easy for the government to challenge the strength of the workers. The government wants to do it piecemeal. It is afraid of the united strength of the workers.

The resistance offered by the workers to the capitalist method of solving the crisis thus has till now thrown the government on the defensive and forced it to move slowly. It has saved the jobs of tens of thousands. It is a big testimony to the strength of the workers.

The last eight months have not been months of victory for capitalists and the government. They have been months of struggles which have forced the government to be cautious in inciting the workers to take up the challenge.

Similarly resistance has grown in rural areas with peasants and agricultural workers in a militant and fighting mood. The recent struggles show that the peasant masses were beginning to hurl the full force of discontent against

every aspect of government policy—procurement, prices, land, wages etc. The coming months which will see governmental procurement, and which will mean more hardships for the smaller peasants, will see a general movement for not giving any grain to the government, accompanied by no-rent and land-to-the-tiller campaigns.

Along with the crisis and the repressive measures which have accompanied it, the last eight months have seen a growth of mass resistance which makes it more and more difficult for the government to solve the crisis at the expense of the people.

### *Nehru Government — Spearhead of Counterrevolution*

The characterisation of the Nehru government as a collaborationist bourgeois government has not only been fully borne out by the events of the last eight months but has been enriched. Recent events have thrown added light on the real face of the government.

*In its internal policy*, the government, as we have seen, seeks to rule by terror in the interests of capitalists, in the defence of the present capitalist setup. Where it is embarrassing to use direct police terror, it uses its mass influence to organise terror gangs from congressmen (Kerala) and starts civil war. These gangs are used in hundreds and thousands so that they cease to be mere gangster warfare but develop into civil war.

*In industrial matters*, the government has thrown off its mask and has come forward as an avowedly capitalist government. It has given up nationalisation, it has assured defence of the capitalist order; it is giving relief from taxation to capitalists, it has sanctioned rationalisation; it is itself embarking upon retrenchment; in the name of fighting inflation it intends to throw fresh burdens on the people, does not prevent the capitalists from reaping huge profits but only limits distribution of dividends. The capitalists attack every reference the government spokesmen make to nationalisation and the government retreats. It

is now becoming clear that the government is formally giving up even the ten-year limit and assuring the capitalists that private enterprise will dominate. All legislation regarding living wage etc. is shelved; by babbling about fair wages, by relating them to fair profits, the government cheats the workers and protects the capitalists.

*On agrarian questions*, the government pursues the policy of adapting feudal land relations to the needs of capitalism and relies on the new class of rich peasants as its firm base. The landlord bills of provincial ministries were a fantastic plan to advance the interests of the rich peasants by making the poor peasants, taxpayers etc. to compensate the landlords and to transform the landlord in so far as he held the land into a capitalist landlord. The main beneficiary was to be the rich peasant, as well as the landlord whose financial interests were to be protected through compensation and whose feudal methods of exploitation were to be modified to suit the needs of the capitalist conditions. Even if these bills are postponed today, the government would be moving in the same direction through one method or another, enabling the rich peasant to loot the agricultural workers and poor peasants, protecting him against the depredations of the landlord, while leaving the landlord free to exploit the poor and middle peasants and agricultural workers.

In agrarian matters also the government has come out as the avowed champion of capitalist elements whose modification of and compromise with feudalism only enhances the burden of exploitation of the toiling peasants.

It is because of this that intense repression is launched; civil liberties are suppressed; the public safety acts enacted; mass arrests of members of CPI ordered; arrests and convictions of workers, peasants, students and occasionally of youths under socialist influence are ordered. The policy could not be implemented except through a general attack on the people as a whole, except by crushing every vestige of democratic right and suppressing every opposition to the ruling clique. The intimidating practices re-

sorted to against the socialists whenever the reformist leadership is forced to embark on strike by the pressure of workers; the intimidation practices against them in the assembly elections (United Provinces), and the unscrupulous use of repressive powers against the CP, its press, its members—constitute an eloquent testimony to the regime which the Congress wants to establish. It is the familiar path—under the cloak of anticommunism, reaction's stealthy attempt to march to fascism and crush all democratic forces at the head of which stands the Communist Party.

The political resolution characterised the government as a collaborationist government—as a government of compromise and collaboration with imperialism. It definitely stated that the bourgeoisie had ceased to play an oppositional role. It also noted that there would be conflicts and differences between the bourgeoisie and imperialism but these would be solved at governmental level.

All these characterisations have not only been proved but enriched in the last eight months.

The bourgeoisie and its government have come out not only as mere compromisers and collaborators; they have come out as the spearhead of the counterrevolutionary forces, the main force which alone because of its mass influence can defend the capitalist order, create disruption among the masses, and organise terror. No other class, neither imperialism nor feudalism, can do it. No other class today can secure wide social support, even though temporary, for the present regime of capitalist order; none can direct such terror and still continue to exist and rule for some time.

### *Hangmen of Popular Revolts in States*

The Indian bourgeoisie is the most fighting, active partner in the bourgeois-feudal-imperialist combine. In relation to the people it is the strongest of the three and today when the main immediate task of the combine is



to stem the tide of revolution, the Indian bourgeoisie comes forward as the leading member of the combine.

The fight for revolution therefore breaks out directly against the rule of the Congress government—and no amount of curses and abuses to imperialism can alter the fact.

In the consciousness of people as well as in reality the fight for revolution means the fight to overthrow the Congress government. It is so because the Congress government and the bourgeoisie are not mere puppets but because in reality they are active partners and leading forces in the combine.

This fact has a number of consequences—the chief among them being that initially the fight for revolution starts with divided forces, i.e. a large section of Congress masses is not prepared to believe that it is necessary to overthrow the government and is therefore often hesitating to make a move, that the present government is not automatically isolated as its predecessor which was the national oppressor.

It means further that the present government cannot be beaten just by anti-imperialist or anticapitalist slogans. Nor can it be beaten by shouting that it is a mere puppet government; that it is imperialism which rules in reality; and by calling on the people to overthrow the imperialist rule. It means that people have to be convinced of the necessity of overthrowing a government which many of them considered to be their own.

The government's role of a spearhead of counter-revolution and protector of the present order was clearly seen in its dealings with the accession of states. Under the original plan of imperialism, the states, though they might not have remained formally independent, would have secured so much freedom as to be continuous thorns on the side of the bourgeoisie and a weapon of imperialist pressure on the bourgeoisie. Perhaps Hyderabad was in the early stages marked out for independence.

But imperialism forgot one important and vital factor in its calculation—the people—whom the bourgeoisie alone could utilise. In actual life therefore the bourgeoisie acting within the framework of the Mountbatten compromising plan has been able to bargain hard and advance its own interests and swing the princes to its side from being a reserve of imperialism. Though the various states signed the instruments of accession prepared by Mountbatten which only handed over defence, foreign affairs etc. to the centre, the Congress leaders soon utilised the threat of mass movement on the one hand and refusal of military help on the other. Thus prince after prince was compelled to agree to elected legislatures which, though they were with restricted franchise, were enough to give the bourgeoisie the required majority and pressure to dominate the states from within—and collaborate with feudal elements on terms favourable to the bourgeoisie—and in consonance with its new status at the centre.

In Hyderabad the bourgeoisie played the same game. Knowing the importance of Hyderabad it took every step with the advice of Mountbatten. But its trump card to frighten imperialism was the popular movements, strength of communist forces etc. It agreed to hold back the popular force, curb the communists, provided imperialism brought pressure on the nizam to accede, failing which it proposed to take action. Again its trump card is elected legislature which under any wide franchise gives it complete majority. Imperialism could not say no to this demand and wanted a compromise.

In Kashmir the bourgeoisie overstepped the bounds of compromise, went to the UNO and got it in the neck.

What is necessary to understand is that the bourgeoisie through accession etc. has not only compromised with the feudal elements but has advanced its own position relatively—both in relation to imperialism and feudal princes; and that it has made the feudal princes its own satellites—in the combine. The princes feel that today only the Congress government can protect them against the

wrath of the people and not imperialism. The bourgeois-feudal alliance is not only in existence against the people but in the bargaining between imperialism and the bourgeoisie the feudal princes act as the ally of the bourgeoisie, i.e. its satellite.

It is this development that now enables the bourgeoisie and its government to come out as the ferocious defender of the mixed order, of the feudal princes etc. Having advanced its own interests, the bourgeoisie act as the spearhead of counterrevolution defending the princely order modified by its own advance. From the point of view of revolutionary development and the interests of the masses, its compromise is nothing but surrender and treachery. From its own selfish class point of view it is a strategic advance which places the initiative in its hands both with regard to feudal princes and in connection with the beating down of the revolutionary mass movement against feudalism.

By betraying the people's interests, by exploiting its influence with the masses, the bourgeoisie has at last secured such an arrangement that through all the compromises it has been able to advance its own interests, and at the same time help the princes by acting as the hangman of the popular revolts. Through this it has further succeeded in tying the princes to itself and facing imperialism with a united bloc. The bourgeoisie has not only improved its position in relation to feudal elements but also in relation to imperialism.

### *Independence and Slavery to Imperialism*

But yet the bourgeoisie and its government remain tied to the imperialists.

Firstly, menaced by the rising tide of communism in Asia and Europe, panicky that the same developments are taking place here (Sardar Patel's repeated warnings about Southeast Asia), the bourgeoisie and its government seek to meet this national and international danger by allying

themselves, i.e. seeking the protection of the imperialist powers, through treaties etc. These treaties and understandings are nothing but an alliance against the labouring masses of India and other countries—and the USSR and other democratic countries. This means joining directly or indirectly the world front of imperialists against the world front of socialism and democracy, for the defence of capitalist order at home and abroad. It means a foreign policy dictated by imperialists and interests of capitalist order, anti-Soviet, antisocialist—a defence based on subservience to the imperialist powers and integrated to war plans of imperialist aggression. It means subordination of India's defence and foreign policy to the dictates of imperialism—in the cause of antisovietism and anti-communism—and sacrifice of independence and sovereignty to the needs of imperialism.

Secondly, the Indian capitalists are dependent on the imperialists in yet another way. For industrial development there are two paths—the path of socialist development, the path of national freedom and democracy. Following this path India could get help for economic advance from the USSR and democratic countries. This would mean economic advance which would safeguard national sovereignty. But the capitalists want the other path—the path of building Indian economy not in co-operation with the USSR but with imperialists. This means capitalist development is determined by the war-needs of imperialist powers and not by the interests of the people. It means begging for capital goods from imperialists who are not prepared to send them unless you sell your foreign policy and defence to them and also agree to accept them as economic partners, and guarantee them that there will be low taxation, no nationalisation, suppression of labour, cheap labour and drive against communists and other democratic forces.

Thus the price of defending the capitalist order, of co-operating with imperialism means complete domination

of internal economic life and foreign relations and defence by world imperialists—loss of sovereignty.

It is thus that dependence and slavery to imperialism is brought about; it is thus that imperialists begin to dominate political and economic life—and not in the old way. It is thus that the bourgeoisie is formally independent; that there comes into existence a formally independent national state—and yet the people continue to be enslaved.

This development is once more clearly seen in the more and more open trek towards imperialist war blocs, the alignment on the various questions in UNO, the open subservience to the imperialist powers, the decision to have relations with the commonwealth which is tied to the west-European union and Anglo-American war bloc.

All these confirm the formulation made in the resolution that the bourgeoisie and its government stand for the war bloc of aggressors, against socialism and democracy.

## II. EIGHT MONTHS OF REPRESSION—CORE OF THE PARTY STANDING FIRM—A SECTION DISPLAYS WEAKNESS DUE TO NONPROLETARIAN COMPOSITION OF THE PARTY— EMERGENCE OF REFORMIST DEVIATION IN NEW FORMS —EXAMPLES

Heavy blows fell on the party immediately after the second congress. Untold repression was launched in Kerala, Tamilnadu, Andhra and other provinces. Number of prominent leaders were arrested, and the virtual illegalisation dislocated the work of the party in the beginning.

The repression launched against our comrades and the masses fighting under our leadership was brutal to the extreme. Torture of the worst kind including driving of pins under nails, merciless flogging, beating, breaking of

ribs and bones, raping of women and tortures of women—all these were let loose. Comrades found carrying messages and papers were beaten to pulp to get information from them about the whereabouts of underground leaders.

To the honour of our party, of the masses fighting under our leadership, it must be said that they stood heroically to this repression and loss of morale was rare. Young workers in Tamilnadu, young kisans in Kerala stood the worst kind of torture but would not give a word of information to the enemy. In the first battle against torture and sadistic terror our south bases—Tamilnadu and Kerala—stood as a glorious example of revolutionary morale and determination of purpose.

From inside the jail young comrades and old veterans carried on the fight through hungerstrikes—fighting against the indignities imposed on them. A. K. Gopalan and other comrades from the south, our UP comrades, comrades from Punjab—old veterans like Sohan Singh Bhakna etc.—all fought the indignities and defended communist honour. They blazed a new path and brought fresh glory to the party.

And in leading the mass struggle of the new type our Kerala comrades led by K.P.R. Gopalan set a new glorious example of revolutionary organisation and leadership. The enemies of the people took vengeance on them by brutally beating them after their arrests and inflicting the worst kind of torture on them.

Yet it is a fact that in many provinces—including major provinces where repression was heavy—the party began to reel under it and unstable elements getting demoralised and even running away from the party. Even in those provinces where repression was not so brutal and nothing compared with the worst in the southern provinces, wavering and unstable elements, accustomed to legal conditions and never having had faced repression, began to waver and vacillate before it, raising doubts about the party line.

One of the legacies of the reformist period is the overwhelmingly petty-bourgeois composition of the party. It was clearly revealed in our analysis of the composition of the party congress made by the credentials committee.

As a logical consequence of the reformist policy the party was based on the wrong classes. The working class, the poor peasant and the agricultural worker were in the main neglected—so far as recruitment inside the party was concerned. In the name of nonsectarianism, bourgeois and petty-bourgeois intellectuals, untempered by Marxist education, were encouraged with all their faults; even these elements themselves were prevented from taking a firm stand against capitalists and reformists and often denounced as terrorists, bhadrals etc. when their anti-imperialist instincts drove them to take a correct stand.

With Marxist education discouraged, with reformist policy in operation, and with workers not supposed to study Marxism—it was next to impossible to inspire the workers to join the party in large numbers. With reformism masquerading as Marxism, the importance of working class as a class was also ignored and no effort was made to promote workingclass cadres, to train them etc.

It is thus that we find that though our party in Andhra has a strong following in the agricultural workers, though it is perhaps the only provincial unit that has from the beginning led struggles of agricultural workers and organised them—the organised strength of agricultural workers in Andhra is 60,000, by far the biggest in any province—yet politically, because of the reformist line of the CC, it is the rural intellectuals, sons of rich peasants and middle peasants that preponderate in important positions, and the party politically based itself on the vacillating politics of the middle peasants, and allowed itself to be influenced even by rich-peasant ideology. The logical conclusion of this was that though our party in Andhra no doubt took up the struggle of poor peasants and agricultural workers, the two played an ineffective part both inside the party and in the kisan movement and not the leading part they

should have played. Inside the party the middle peasant or the rural intellectual is the leader and not the poor peasant or the agricultural worker.

To take another instance, the party in Bengal and especially Calcutta in spite of having led so many strikes is almost exclusively based on the nonproletarian strata, i.e. its composition is nonproletarian.

It is because of this wrong social base that in Andhra half the party nearly collapsed before the intense repression—some prominent members, even one or two members of the provincial committee, having deserted the party. The havoc was worst among functionaries of lower committees—village committees, cells etc., which were manned by intellectuals, sons of rich peasants, etc. Both in Tamilnadu with its working class and Kerala with its poor-peasant base, the party and its masses withstood the repression very well.

At the same time it is a fact that the overwhelming majority of members—coming from all sections—stood their ground heroically in all the provinces. But nonetheless waverings and vacillations, and even desertions were there because of petty-bourgeois composition of the party. If Marxist law of class struggle and class understanding has any meaning it means that unless the social composition of the party is quickly changed, unless the overwhelming majority of members are strengthened in their Marxism—i.e. unless proletarianisation of the party is carried on both ideologically and in composition—even then elements which have remained firm now, will vacillate when still bigger offensives are unleashed.

The overwhelming petty-bourgeois composition of the party therefore made it almost inevitable that some elements in the party should vacillate before the repression and cast doubts about the fighting line. But even apart from repression the social composition of the party made it almost inevitable that a number of petty-bourgeois elements should run riot, interpret the line according to their special illusions, and advocate the same old reformist path



in a different guise. The party congress gave a line based on class realities, but it is the inevitable tendency of the petty bourgeois to forget class realities and substitute himself as the driving force of history and advocate slogans which really turn out to be reformist.

One of the results of the selfcriticism made by the central committee was that certain petty-bourgeois elements—not the majority—consider themselves free to put any interpretation they liked on the line; criticise the central committee without even reference to the party congress thesis; and of course forget that the party was based on Marxism-Leninism and that the congress had adopted a long political resolution.

Thus vacillations and hesitations arise regarding the party line among certain elements though the overwhelming majority has steadfastly stuck to the line and has attempted to improve its understanding. The vacillations, wrong understanding, the role of irresponsible critics—is emphasised in a small section of leadership—central and provincial and in certain intellectual and petty-bourgeois elements in the ranks, and among those occupying positions in the kisan and trade-union movements.

First come those who panicky before the repression want to return to a line which would not disturb the quiet tenor of their life, restore firm legal conditions to make the party an appendage of the bourgeoisie. To such category belong certain leaders and also the hidden opponents of the party line who dared not oppose it in the congress but who are waiting for a suitable opportunity to come out with the old advice.

Next come those who have made no genuine self-criticism of their own past, who wrongly think that they have been right all the time and who therefore fail to take the political decisions of the congress seriously and advocate their own reformist conception of class relations and political line. To this category belong the Andhra secretariat—whose documents besides being reformist, reveal

that they have not taken the congress seriously and have not made any genuine revolutionary selfcriticism of themselves. The line advocated by them in the first document has not only nothing to do with the party congress line but constitutes an attempt to restore the former reformist line.

Next come deviations arising out of a failure to apply the line to certain special questions like nationality etc. where just because the resolution fails to analyse the question on the basis of class relations, the correct way is not easily found and hangover of the past remains.

These are open manifestations of right-reformism. Added to this is the new disease—the hidden manifestation of right-reformism which masquerades as left-revolutionism, as uncompromising struggle against reformism.

This is a dangerous tendency because a number of honest elements, genuinely revolutionary and yielding to none in their desire to break away from right-reformism and carry on a revolutionary struggle against the bourgeoisie, became victims of this tendency in their just anger and indignation at repression, or general impatience. These elements find themselves often in the strange company of those who are at heart reformists but who raise every time extreme slogans, general slogans, irrespective of place and time, to reduce the party line to absurdity and thus make out a case for going back to the old reformist line.

Whatever the subjective desire of the honest elements, howsoever eager and honest they might be in their desire to fight reformism, the bourgeoisie cannot be fought unless on each and every occasion the concrete class situation is studied, and concrete slogans are advanced to fight them. However it is precisely this that is forgotten by the petty-bourgeois revolutionist—the typical disease of all petty bourgeoisie being the ignoring of the class realities. That is why it leads to the same reformist results as an open reformist policy—i.e. it paralyses the proletariat, its

ability to fight the bourgeoisie, expose it, isolate it. It has to be combated inside the party seriously. In what form does this petty-bourgeois revolutionism which leads to right-reformist results appear? It appears as a repetition of general slogans and abandonment of all special efforts to make the masses realise the correlations of our general line.

The special characteristic of this type of petty-bourgeois revolutionaries is total inability to study concrete class relations, to apply the line to a developing situation. It is abandonment of all pretence to base oneself on a class analysis.

These deviations have come in manifold forms and various ways. The Andhra secretariat made class formulations totally at variance with the party thesis and declared that only the big bourgeoisie have gone collaborationist—and from this they logically deduced that in the agrarian revolutionary struggles the rich peasant is not to be fought but to be neutralised. This open advocacy of class-collaboration, this pseudoclass analysis whose practical conclusion was collaboration with the rich peasantry would have had the political consequence of returning to the Mountbatten resolution, for it means only Tatas and Birlas are no longer oppositional, the remaining section of the bourgeoisie was still oppositional—and from this someone in the Congress would have been described as the representative of the oppositional bourgeoisie and the conclusion would have been drawn that we should cooperate with him or them. This was only one step short of advocating the policy of driving a wedge between the Congress and big business, saving certain Congress leaders from the clutches of big business and so on.

This was combined with a lot of left phraseology about Nehru being fascist—about Telangana etc.—all of which of course was mere dressing for the opportunist theory of collaboration with the bourgeoisie, and for finding someone other than Nehru or Patel—Jayaprakash Narayan for

instance—to rely on. The Andhra documents reveal right reformism in its crassest form.

In Bengal a similar thing was attempted without the class analysis. The Bengal provincial secretariat passed a trade-union resolution which liquidates the trade-union upsurge and in the course of which comrades solemnly discussed whether there was upsurge or not, totally forgetting the crisis and the economic analysis made by the party congress.

In UP, Azamgarh furnishes an instance of petty-bourgeois funk before the masses, before a wide sweep of mass struggles, running away from the battle in the name of organisation, and with Telangana on the lips, funking mass struggle and satisfying the conscience by attempting to organise individual actions.

On many occasions the deviation appears in the shape of an exclusive emphasis on securing the technical means of struggle, without having any masses behind us. Give us the means—becomes a substitute for rallying the masses. In this form it amounts to means divorced from the real struggle of the masses.

Petty-bourgeois revolutionism also appears as a refusal to fight the machinations of imperialism, feudal reaction and bourgeoisie in the concrete—and bases itself not on the actual condition and stage of class struggle, but on the heroism of phrases. For instance on the question of Hyderabad this type of phrasemongering advocated resistance to the Indian Union army as "imperialist aggression". It did not stop to think about the stage of the democratic movement, the consciousness of the people, the machinations of the nizam and the manoeuvrings of the bourgeoisie. Left phrasemongering which would have helped the bourgeoisie to isolate the CPI and which would have made the masses believe that the CPI stand helps the nizam while Congress opposes the nizam—such would have been the logical conclusion of such a policy.

The same deviation also appears on the question of Kashmir, where this type of outlook takes a position of no distinction between the raiders and the Indian army—under the excuse that there is no distinction between Pakistan and Indian Union. According to this standpoint not only is there no distinction between Pakistan and Indian Union on any question, that no distinction can be made on any future question also; also that there is no distinction between Indian Union and imperialism—is not the former a tool of Anglo-American imperialists, they argue. The counterrevolutionary result of this outlook is to be seen in the acts of the communists of Pondicherry who have shamelessly advocated remaining inside the French imperialist union.

The heroic stand of making no distinctions only helps imperialism—and its right-reformist friends, the proimperialist reformism, which also was prevalent in the worst days of reformist deviation.

The right-reformist tendency further appears in yet another left form—in the form of saying that nothing has changed—that the Mountbatten award and subsequent developments have not meant any shift in the class relations, arguing as if imperialism rules as before. The advocates of this outlook become extremely impatient when they hear anybody say, "The bourgeoisie has secured power", etc. According to them even the bourgeoisie has not gained by the deal. They thus advance slogans as if it is an imperialist state isolated from the masses, fail to see in the bourgeoisie the spearhead of counterrevolution, fail to see that the present government or state just because it is manned by the bourgeoisie has yet popular support which must be weaned away, and in practice relies on classes and strata which are either wavering or inimical to the proletariat. Their slogan "nothing has changed" leads them to the old class setup in which the bourgeoisie was oppositional with its followers spontaneously playing an anti-imperialist role, and they rely on this. While-

they appear to condemn the bourgeoisie most with their slogan "nothing has changed" their practice is such that they appear to rely on rich peasants and other sections of the bourgeoisie, as well as its immediate petty-bourgeois followers to spontaneously rally round them.

In the trade-union struggles, the deviation appears as rejection of steadfastly building TUs, exploiting the possibility of legal TU movement, boycott in principle of works committees etc.—all of which can be effectively summarised as failure to wage a dogged fight for workingclass unity—for the class unity of the working class. The struggle for the extension of our TUs through united-front tactics, of workingclass unity through special work in reformist unions, the building of class unity in the course of strike struggles by building wide and broadbased organs of proletarian resistance—is not being properly organised. In short, we are more or less content with what we are holding and are not planning an all-out effort to wage a persistent struggle in all forms—from failure to work out mass campaigns—to isolate and undermine the bourgeois influence among the workers.

On the kisan front the deviation is one of holding back the agricultural workers, poor peasants, and relying on middle and rich peasants—one which is being overcome.

Similarly there is the deviation on organisational questions which arose out of a wrong political outlook. Despite the wide offensive against the party, comrades in certain provinces take a bourgeois reformist attitude towards illegal apparatus, underground work and fail to protect the party apparatus. In Bengal the provincial secretariat would not be roused to the danger to the existence of the party even after a member of the PB had brought it to the notice of the secretariat. The way in which leading comrades were arrested in Azamgarh along with the DC, the way in which the entire Kanpur DC was arrested—point out to a reckless disregard of elementary principles, an outlook based on formal democracy fostered in the period of re-

formism and strengthened by a wrong interpretation of the selfcriticism made by the CC and a complacent reformist outlook towards the safety of the apparatus.

### III. LENINIST CONCEPTION OF STRATEGY AND TACTICS AND ITS APPLICATION TO THE PRESENT STAGE OF THE REVOLUTION IN INDIA

These questions cannot be tackled unless certain fundamental notions are clarified. Obviously many of these deviations arise from confusion between strategy and tactics—strategy of the entire period and the tactical slogans given from time to time; from a confusion between the basic slogans of a period and intermediary slogans which take the masses forward to the realisation of the basic slogans; from a failure to understand the real implications of the vanguard role of the party.

Inside the Communist Party the understanding of a whole period and the strategy chalked out for a given stage of the revolution cannot be challenged every now and then, directly or indirectly. It changes and can be changed only if the party feels that the understanding of the period as a whole is wrong, that the class relationship is wrongly understood and therefore the understanding must be changed or the old class relationship has become obsolete or if the stage of revolution to which the understanding related is over etc. For an understanding of the period and the strategy for the period are based on an existing class setup, on the role of various classes—and to change them, it must be first proved that the roles of the classes have changed, that the particular period is over. All suggestions, amendments, questions, doubts which only seek to change the basic understanding indirectly, surreptitiously, without raising fundamental questions—for instance the existence of the world crisis, class relationship in India—are impermissible. For instance to raise the question whether

upsurge exists or not is really to raise the question whether world crisis exists or not and whether we are in a revolutionary period, a period of revolutionary advance and victory or not. No one dare raise the question. Yet opportunism smuggles itself by avoiding battle on basic issues and seeking to modify them.

To avoid this confusion we must clarify the Leninist conception of strategy, basic slogans, tactics etc. Stalin in his *Foundations of Leninism* wrote on "Strategy and Tactics as the Science of Leadership in the Class Struggle of the Proletariat."

"Strategy", according to Stalin, "is the determination of the main blow of the proletariat at a given stage of the revolution, the elaboration of a corresponding plan for the disposition of the revolutionary forces (the main and secondary reserves), the fight to carry out this plan throughout the given stage of the revolution."

"Strategy deals with the main forces of the revolution and their reserves. It changes with the passing of the revolution from one stage to another, but remains essentially unchanged throughout a given stage."

Describing the strategy of the revolution at different phases, Stalin writes:

"Our revolution already passed through two stages, and after the October revolution it has entered a third stage. Our strategy changed accordingly.

*"First stage.* 1903 to February 1917. Objective: to overthrow tsarism and completely wipe out the survivals of medievalism. The main force of the revolution: the proletariat. Immediate reserves: the peasantry. Direction of the main blow: the isolation of the liberal-monarchist bourgeoisie, which was striving to win over the peasantry and liquidate the revolution by *compromising* with tsarism. Plan for the disposition of forces: alliance of the working class with the peasantry. "The proletariat must carry to



completion the democratic revolution, by allying to itself the mass of the peasantry in order to crush by force the resistance of the autocracy and to paralyse the instability of the bourgeoisie' (Lenin).

"*Second stage.* March 1917 to October 1917. Objective: to overthrow imperialism in Russia and to withdraw from the imperialist war. The main force of the revolution: the proletariat. Immediate reserves: the poor peasantry. The proletariat of neighbouring countries as probable reserves. The protracted war and the crisis of imperialism as the favourable factor. Direction of the main blow: isolation of petty-bourgeois democrats (mensheviks and socialist-revolutionaries), who were striving to win over the toiling masses of the peasantry and to terminate the revolution by *compromising* with imperialism. Plan for the disposition of forces: alliance of the proletariat with the poor peasantry. 'The proletariat must accomplish the socialist revolution by allying to itself the mass of the semiproletarian elements of the population in order to crush by force the resistance of the bourgeoisie and to paralyse the instability of the peasantry and the petty bourgeoisie' (Lenin)."

### *Strategy in the Present Phase of the Indian Revolution*

In short, strategy is the particular class alliance—disposition of revolutionary forces which the proletariat must bring about in order to smash the enemy that holds power. It holds good for the entire period, stage of the revolution. What is the strategy that we have outlined for our stage of the revolution? It is given in a nutshell in the slogan of democratic front which is defined as an alliance of working class, peasants, oppressed middle class, against bourgeois-feudal-imperialist combine.

If we were to define our strategy in Leninist terms we would have to describe it as follows:

Objective: overthrow of the bourgeois government heading imperialist-bourgeois-feudal combine, completely wip-

ing out survivals of medievalism and going to the transitional economy through nationalisation etc. The main force of the revolution: the proletariat. Immediate reserves: agrarian workers, poor peasants, middle peasants (also oppressed sections of petty bourgeoisie in towns). Direction of the main blow: isolation of the ruling bourgeois circles from their masses as well as isolation of other bourgeois and petty-bourgeois parties and groups (Socialist Party etc.). Plan for the disposition of the peasantry, firmly relying on the agrarian workers and poor peasants. "The proletariat must accomplish the people's democratic revolution by allying to itself the agricultural workers and poor peasants—followed by the middle peasants in order to isolate the bourgeoisie and crush their resistance by force."

It will be found that the stage of revolution in which we are partly shares the characteristics of both stages of the Russian revolution. We must especially note the fact that unlike in the second stage of the Russian revolution, we have to work for both isolating and overthrowing the bourgeoisie. In the second stage of the Russian revolution the direction of the main blow was against the petty-bourgeois democrats because then the bourgeois parties were already discredited and only through petty-bourgeois mensheviks and socialist-revolutionaries operating in the soviets, was the bourgeoisie being saved and masses betrayed.

### *Isolate the Bourgeoisie to Overthrow It*

In our country the ruling bourgeoisie itself, the Congress leaders are far more powerful in their mass influence than any other petty-bourgeois party; they have not yet lost their mass influence and they have to be systematically unmasked and isolated in order to overthrow them.

The political thesis adopted by the second congress

emphasised the task of isolating the bourgeois leadership in the following words\*

"We must remember that those in charge of the ...and build a new understanding of national unity."

The task of tearing away of the masses, of isolating the bourgeois leadership, of directing the main blow to undermine its influence as part of the strategic plan to over-name of right-reformism—has to be fought.

The strategic plan given above is exactly the plan given by the second congress; this has to be remembered. Any change in this plan—covert or open, indirectly advocated in the garb of left-criticism, or directly put forward in the name of right-reformism—has to be fought.

### *Stalin on Tactics*

"Tactics", says Stalin in *Leninism*, "are the determination of the line of conduct of the proletariat in the comparatively short period of the flow or ebb of the movement, of the rise or decline of the revolution, the fight to carry out this line by means of replacing old forms of struggle and organisation by new ones, old slogans by new ones, by combining these forms, etc. While the object of strategy is to win the war against tsarism, let us say, or against the bourgeoisie, to carry the struggle against tsarism, or against the bourgeoisie to its end, tactics concern themselves with less important objects, for they aim not at winning the war as a whole, but at winning a particular engagement, or a particular battle, at carrying through successfully a particular campaign or a particular action corresponding to the concrete circumstances in the given period of rise or decline of the revolution. *Tactics are a part of strategy, subordinate to it and serving it* (emphasis added).

"Tactics change according to flow and ebb. While the strategic plan remained unchanged during the first stage of the revolution (1903 to February 1917) tactics changed"

\* See this volume, pp 56-57.

several times during that period. In the period from 1903 to 1905 the party pursued offensive tactics, for the tide of revolution was rising, the movement was on the upgrade and tactics had to proceed from this fact. Accordingly, the forms of struggle were revolutionary, corresponding to the requirements of the rising tide of the revolution. Local political strikes, political demonstrations, the general political strike, boycott of the duma, insurrection, revolutionary fighting slogans—such were the successive forms of struggle during that period. These changes in the forms of struggle were accompanied by corresponding changes in the forms of organisation. Factory committees, revolutionary peasant committees, strike committees, soviets of workers' deputies, a workers' party operating more or less openly—such were the forms of organisation during that period.

"In the period from 1907 to 1912 the party was compelled to resort to tactics of retreat; for we then experienced a decline in the revolutionary movement, the ebb of the revolution, and the tactics necessarily had to take this fact into consideration. The forms of struggle as well as the forms of organisation changed accordingly: Instead of the boycott of the duma there was participation in the duma; instead of open, direct revolutionary action outside the duma, there were parliamentary speeches and work in the duma; instead of general political strikes there were partial economic strikes, or simply a lull in the activities. Of course, the party had to go underground during that period, while the revolutionary mass organisations were superseded by cultural, educational, cooperative, insurance and other legal organisations.

"The same must be said of the second and third stages of the revolution, during which tactics changed dozens of times, whereas the strategical plans remained unchanged.

"Tactics deal with the forms of struggle and the forms of organisation of the proletariat, with their changes and combinations. During a given stage of the revolution tac-

tics may change several times, depending on the flow and ebb, the rise and decline of the revolution."

"Tactical leadership", says Stalin, "is a part of strategic leadership, subordinated to the tasks and requirements of the latter. The task of tactical leadership is to master all forms of struggle and organisation of the proletariat and to ensure that they are used properly so as to achieve, with the given alignment of forces, the maximum results necessary to prepare for strategic success.

"What is meant by making proper use of the forms of struggle and organisation of the proletariat?

"It means fulfilling certain necessary conditions, of which the following must be regarded as the principal ones:

*"First:* To put in the forefront precisely those forms of struggle and organisation which are best suited to the conditions prevailing during the flow or ebb of the movement at a given moment, and which therefore can facilitate and ensure the bringing of the millions to the revolutionary positions, the bringing of the millions to the revolutionary front, and their disposition at the revolutionary front.

"The point here is not that the vanguard shall realise the impossibility of preserving the old order of things and the inevitability of its overthrow. The point is that the masses, the millions, shall understand this inevitability and display their readiness to support the vanguard. But the masses can understand this only from their own experience. The task is to enable the vast masses to realise from their own experience the inevitability of the overthrow of the old regime, to promote such methods of struggle and forms of organisation as will make it easier for the masses to learn from experience to recognise the correctness of the revolutionary slogans.

"The vanguard would have become detached from the working class, and the working class would have lost contact with the masses, if the party had not decided at the

time to participate in the duma, if it had not decided to concentrate its forces on work in the duma and to base the struggle on this work, in order to make it easier for the masses to realise from their own experience the futility of the duma, the falsity of the promises of the constitutional-democrats, the impossibility of compromise with tsarism, and the inevitability of an alliance between the peasantry and the working class. Had the masses not gained their experience during the period of the duma, the exposure of the constitutional-democrats and the hegemony of the proletariat would have been impossible.

"The danger of the 'otzovist'\* tactics was that they threatened to detach the vanguard from the millions of its reserves.

"The party would have become detached from the working class, and the working class would have lost its influence among the broad masses of the peasants and soldiers, if the proletariat had followed the left-communists, who called for insurrection in April 1917, when the mensheviks and the socialist-revolutionaries had not yet exposed themselves as advocates of war and imperialism, when the masses had not yet learned from their own experience to recognise the falsity of the speeches of the mensheviks and the socialist-revolutionaries about peace, land and freedom. Had the masses not gained this experience during the Kerensky period, the mensheviks and socialist-revolutionaries would not have been isolated and the dictatorship of the proletariat would have been impossible. Therefore, the tactics of 'patiently explaining' the mistakes of the petty-bourgeois parties and of open struggle in the soviets were the only correct tactics.

"The danger of the tactics of the left-communists was that they threatened to transform the party from the

\* From the Russian *otozvat*—to recall; the name given to a group of former bolsheviks who demanded the recall of the workers' deputies from the state duma and the discontinuation of work in legally existing organisations.

leader of the proletarian revolution into a handful of inane conspirators with no ground to stand on.

"Victory cannot be achieved 'with the vanguard alone', says Lenin. 'To throw the vanguard alone into the decisive battle, before the whole class, before the broad masses have taken up a position either of direct support of the vanguard, or at least of benevolent neutrality towards it... would not merely be folly but a crime. And in order that actually the whole class, that actually the broad masses of the toilers and those oppressed by capital may take up such a position, propaganda and agitation alone are not enough. For this the masses must have their own political experience. Such is the fundamental law of all great revolutions, now confirmed with astonishing force and vividness not only in Russia but also in Germany. Not only the uncultured, often illiterate, masses of Russia, but the highly-cultured, entirely literate masses of Germany had to realise through their own painful experience the absolute impotence and spinelessness, the absolute helplessness and servility to the bourgeoisie, the utter vileness of the government of the knights of the Second International, the absolute inevitability of a dictatorship of the extreme reactionaries (Kornilov in Russia, Kapp and Co in Germany) as the only alternative to a dictatorship of the proletariat, in order to turn resolutely toward communism' (Lenin)".

Commenting further on how the bolsheviks succeeded in convincing the masses and leading them, Stalin writes:

*"Fourth peculiar feature:* The picture would not be complete if we did not deal with the question of how and why the bolsheviks were able to transform their party slogans into slogans for the vast masses, into slogans which pushed the revolution forward; why and how they succeeded in convincing not only the vanguard, and not only the majority of the working class, but also the majority of the people, of the correctness of their policy.

"The fact is that for the victory of the revolution, if it

is really a people's revolution which embraces the masses in their millions, correct party slogans alone are not enough. For the victory of the revolution one more necessary condition is required, namely, that the masses themselves become convinced through their own experience of the correctness of these slogans. Only then do the slogans of the party become the slogans of the masses themselves. Only then does the revolution really become a people's revolution. One of the peculiar features of the tactics of the bolsheviks in the period of preparation for October was that they correctly determined the paths and turnings which would naturally lead the masses up to the party's slogans—to the very threshold of the revolution, so to speak—thus helping them to feel, to test, to realise by their own experience the correctness of these slogans. In other words, one of the peculiar features of the tactics of the bolsheviks is that they do not confuse leadership of the party with leadership of the masses; that they clearly see the difference between the first sort of leadership and the second sort of leadership; that they, therefore, represent the science, not only of party leadership, but of leadership of the vast masses of the working people.

"A graphic example of the manifestation of this feature of bolshevik tactics was provided by the experience of convening and dispersing the constituent assembly.

"It is well known that the bolsheviks advanced the slogan of a soviet republic as early as April 1917. It is well known that the constituent assembly was a bourgeois parliament, fundamentally opposed to the principles of a soviet republic. How could it happen that the bolsheviks, who were aiming for a republic of soviets, at the same time demanded that the provisional government should immediately convene the constituent assembly? How could it happen that the bolsheviks not only took part in the elections, but themselves convened the constituent assembly? How could it happen that a month before the insurrection, in the transition from the old to the new, the bolsheviks



considered a temporary combination of a republic of soviets with the constituent assembly possible?

"This 'happened' because:

"(1) The idea of a constituent assembly was one of the most popular ideas among the broad masses of the population;

"(2) The slogan of the immediate convocation of the constituent assembly helped to expose the counterrevolutionary nature of the provisional government;

"(3) In order to discredit the idea of a constituent assembly in the eyes of the masses, it was necessary to lead the masses to the walls of the constituent assembly with their demands for land, for peace, for the power of the soviets, thus bringing them face to face with the real and authentic constituent assembly;

"(4) Only this could help the masses to become convinced through their own experience of the counter-revolutionary nature of the constituent assembly and of the necessity of dispersing it;

"(5) All this naturally presupposed the possibility of a temporary combination of the soviet republic with the constituent assembly, as one of the means of eliminating the latter;

"(6) Such a combination, if brought about *on the condition* that all power were transferred to the soviets, could only signify the subordination of the constituent assembly to the soviets, its conversion into an appendage of the soviets, its painless extinction.

"It need hardly be proved that had the bolsheviks not adopted such a policy the dispersion of the constituent assembly would not have taken place so smoothly, and the subsequent actions of the socialist-revolutionaries and mensheviks under the slogan "All power to the Constituent Assembly" would not have failed so signally.

"'We took part', says Lenin, 'in the elections to the Russian bourgeois parliament, the constituent assembly, in September-November 1917. Were our tactics correct

or not?... Did not we, the Russian bolsheviks, have *more* right in September-November 1917 than any western communists to consider that parliamentarism was politically dead in Russia? Of course we did, for the point is *not* whether bourgeois parliaments have existed for a long time or for a short time, but how far the broad masses of the working people are *prepared* (ideologically, politically and practically) to accept the soviet system and to 'disperse the bourgeois-democratic parliament (or allow it to be dispersed). That owing to a number of special conditions, the urban working class and the soldiers and peasants of Russia were in September-November 1917 exceptionally well prepared to accept the soviet system and to disperse the most democratic bourgeois parliaments, is an absolutely incontestable and fully established historical fact. Nevertheless, the bolsheviks did *not* boycott the constituent assembly, but took part in the elections both before the proletariat conquered political power and *after*.'

"Why then did they not boycott the constituent assembly? Because, says Lenin:

"...participation in a bourgeois-democratic parliament even a few weeks before the victory of a soviet republic, and even *after* such a victory, not only does not harm the revolutionary proletariat, but actually helps it to *prove* to the backward masses why such parliaments deserve to be dispersed; it *helps* their successful dispersal, and *helps* to make bourgeois parliamentarism politically obsolete.'"

### *Our Tactical Line Today*

What is our tactical line—subordinated to the strategy outlined above? What are the forms of struggle that we advocate—and the organisation of the proletariat that we build?

The forms of struggle are determined both by our strategic objective and the revolutionary period. The objective of overthrowing the bourgeoisie combined with the

existence of the revolutionary period and the rapidly-moving revolutionary developments impose on us the militant and revolutionary forms of struggle and organisation. Hence strikes, agrarian struggles, armed conflicts, general strikes, political strikes—all heading towards insurrection—such are the forms of struggle that flow from the situation. Corresponding to that are also the forms of organisation which are revolutionary peasants' committees (Telangana), or strike committees, illegal factory committees, or peasants' committees—to conduct the struggle, or squads, guerilla or volunteer squads to defend the workers and peasants, which develop into an instrument of attack also.

At the same time these forms of struggle do not exhaust all the forms which we have to utilise and we are utilising. We still participate in parliaments; lead deputations and demonstrations; appear before industrial tribunals in trade disputes; participate in tripartite conferences; do all kinds of preparatory work from holding ordinary union meetings to exposing some industrial wrong, to holding political and group meetings whose main object is exposure, attack or criticism of the government. We thus see that we cannot get away from the elementary forms of protest, agitation and struggle, though the situation is full of revolutionary possibilities.

Why is it so? Because though the situation is full of revolutionary possibilities, the masses everywhere are not learning and moving with uniform rapidity and consciousness. In some parts they have already left the preparatory stage and are determined to wage struggle with utmost determination—convinced that the government has to be fought—and in some cases fully realising that it has to be overthrown. In large tracts the struggles are just beginning—with vast sections poised for the first direct fight against the present government—fight for some immediate issue, or for the basic issue of land or wage—with many of them still to realise that the fight is not only against the landlord but against the government as well. But as the

fight develops they learn it with astonishing rapidity, and grow into organising armed resistance in partial struggles themselves and begin to realise that the government has to be ended. Thus with quick rapidity masses embarking upon partial struggles learn to take political position: they become politicalised. This process is accelerated by the leadership of the party which also puts before them direct political issues, issues of political power, political exposure and campaign. The two currents convince the fighting masses that the government is to be liquidated.

The uneven development of disillusionment and consciousness, the uneven character of the political experience of the masses, the far from uniform strength of the influence of the proletariat and its party in different provinces, areas and sections of the masses, and finally the influence of the bourgeois leadership—all combine to produce a situation in which the working class must be prepared to use from "the most elementary to the most advanced and revolutionary forms of struggle—with the one object of rapidly bringing the masses to the point at which they themselves will echo the party's cry for the overthrow of the government.

It is because of this that we find on the one hand Telangana—armed struggle of the peasants against feudal rule, with revolutionary committees confiscating and distributing land and solving the land problem in a revolutionary way, and acting as nucleus of new people's power—with ordinary strike activity in Bombay or Calcutta accompanied by appearing before industrial tribunals. Ordinarily party members would not like to speak of Telangana and filing the workers' case before tribunals in the same breath—and yet, life, the reality of class struggle is such that the party which wields arms in Telangana, files cases before the industrial tribunals in Calcutta and Bombay. It is the same situation that gives us armed peasants' resistance in parts of Kerala, with ordinary peasant meetings of support in other provinces; the occu-

pation of factories in Ferozabad by angry workers with acceptance of some ordinary concessions elsewhere.

It would be nothing short of treachery, if we were to stabilise or freeze this situation, if we were not to make conscious efforts to see that everywhere the elementary forms of resistance are being left behind by the masses and proceed to higher forms of struggle for the objective of overthrowing the present rule. It would be rank opportunism if anyone were to state that just because the present consciousness is what it is today—we must only conduct partial struggles etc. This is exploiting the existing level of consciousness to betray the masses. Just because it is a revolutionary period, we know that the most elementary struggle will set in motion forces which will enable the masses to overcome their present consciousness and therefore today we do not put up a Chinese wall between the economic and political struggles; nor do we accept that it will take years for the various sections to come to the level of advanced consciousness. On the other hand we know that struggle of the masses is a great teacher which enables all backwardness to be overcome.

Nonetheless, to start with we have to take into account the uneven development of consciousness and advance a form of struggle suited to the consciousness of the participants. This unevenness we must realise is due to the fact that the bourgeoisie still possesses great influence; that the influence of the proletariat is uneven. The struggle to isolate the bourgeoisie is the struggle to overcome this unevenness and bring the masses to the level of the consciousness of the advance sections—to realise that the present setup must be overthrown by means of a revolutionary struggle, that there is no other way out of the situation.

Here again we thus find that the strategic formulation that the bourgeoisie has to be isolated in order to be overthrown, finds expression in tactical forms of struggle rendered necessary by the situation.

This makes it all the more necessary that not only in

relation to forms of struggle but in relation to political slogans also the same law should be applied. Taking into consideration the level of mass consciousness etc., the party has to combine ways and means to see that the slogans of the party become the slogans of the masses, through their own experience. The party has to so guide itself, so guide the struggles of the masses, advance such slogans from time to time, that the masses begin to realise the correctness of the basic slogans of the party—on the basis of their own experience. This of course cannot be done by only repeating the basic slogans in all situations, pitching your tent on these basic slogans and hoping that one day the masses will see the truth and enter the tent.

Writing about the mistakes of the German left, Lenin says:

“Parliamentarism, of course, is ‘politically obsolete’ for the communists in Germany; but—and that is the whole point—we must *not* regard what is obsolete for us as being obsolete for the masses. Here again we find that the ‘lefts’ do not know how to reason, do not know how to conduct themselves as the party of the *class*, as the party of the *masses*. You must not sink to the level of the masses, to the level of the backward strata of the class. This is incontestable. You must tell them the bitter truth. You must call their bourgeois-democratic and parliamentary prejudices—prejudices. But at the same time you must soberly observe the *actual* state of class consciousness and preparedness of the whole class (not only of the communist vanguard), of all the toiling masses (not only of their advanced elements)” (“*Left-wing Communism*”).

Lastly it must be remembered that the objective of our strategy and tactics is to win over the majority of the people to be able to smash the bourgeoisie. The people's democratic front—the class-alliance built through it, is the alliance with the majority of the people. It is an instrument of winning over the majority under proletarian leadership. Every manoeuvre, every tactic we advance

must be judged on this context—how it takes you to winning over the majority of the people for revolution. Stalin quotes from Lenin:

"'If a revolutionary party has not a majority among the vanguard of the revolutionary classes and in the country generally, there can be no question of insurrection.'

"'...Revolution is impossible without a change in the views of the majority of the working class, and this change is brought about by the political experience of the masses.'

"'The proletarian vanguard has been ideologically won over. That is the main thing. Without it even the first step towards victory cannot be taken. But it is still quite a long way from the victory. With the vanguard alone victory cannot be achieved. To throw the vanguard alone into the decisive battle, before the whole class, before the broad masses have taken up a position either of direct support of the vanguard or at least one of benevolent neutrality towards it and one in which they cannot possibly support the enemy, would not be merely folly but a crime. And in order that actually the whole class, that actually the broad masses of the toilers and oppressed by the capital may take up such a position, propaganda and agitation alone are not sufficient. For this the masses must have their own political experience.'"

Stalin asks, "What does *leadership* mean when the party policy is correct and the correct relations between the vanguard and the class are not disturbed?"

"Leadership under these circumstances means the ability to convince the masses of the correctness of the party's policy; the ability to put forward and carry out such slogans as bring the masses to the party position, and help them to realise by their own experience the correctness of the party's policy; the ability to raise the masses to the party's level of consciousness, and thus secure the support of the masses and their readiness for the decisive struggle."

These are the criteria which we must bear in mind

when we deal with the questions raised and deviations seen. These are the tasks we must bear in mind which a party has to discharge, which the proletariat has to accomplish—winning over the majority of the people.

As regards this latter task, a warning has come from the organ the Cominform pointing out the fact that in many countries even the majority of working class has not been won over as yet by the communist parties. The warning of the Cominform organ applies to India as well.

"Serious battles are ahead of the working class of the capitalist countries. The bourgeoisie and their agents—the right-socialists and other traitors—will again try to undermine the strength and unity of the democratic movement, to influence certain groups of working people. Unremitting and ever-increasing organisational and political propaganda work is needed on the part of the communist parties to counter the influence of the bourgeois ideology on the masses, and to win over increasing sections of workers, peasants and the intelligentsia. This is all the more important since in a number of countries there are serious shortcomings in the mass political and educational work of the communists, and since they have not as yet won decisive influence even among the working class in a number of places.

"By continually improving their *organisational and mobilising role among the masses* (emphasis ours) the communist parties in capitalist countries will win new successes" (*For a Lasting Peace, For a People's Democracy*, 1 September 1948).

#### IV. ON THE CHARACTER OF THE PRESENT STAGE OF REVOLUTION IN INDIA—CRITIQUE OF THE DOCUMENTS OF THE ANDHRA PROVINCIAL COMMITTEE SECRETARIAT

In the light of the foregoing we must judge the line advanced by the Andhra secretariat which reveals reformism in its most naked and gross form. It is true that the



Andhra secretariat has somewhat changed its formulation in subsequent documents, but the changes are not material and its last documents dealing with practical tasks once more reveal that it stands rooted in a reformist outlook.\*

The PB must sharply criticise the Andhra documents, not only because they reveal the standpoint of one of our biggest provincial committees, but because the Andhra secretariat contains at least two members of the PB and four members of the CC. That a section of the central committee and PB should hold such views after the party congress is alarming to the extreme.

Here we will deal only with the document of the secretariat, and not with Nageswar Rao's documents,† who draws a mechanical parallel to the situation before the October revolution and whose position, so far as it is based on this mechanical parallel—we reject. Yet there are many correct things in his document—fight against rich peasants etc. In a general way the question of the stage of the revolution has been answered in another document.‡ It ought to solve a number of difficulties of Nageswar Rao.

The document of the secretariat is an open attempt to take the party back to the 'Mountbatten resolution' position—and repudiate the line adopted by the second congress.

What are the formulations of the Andhra documents on the stage and strategy of the revolution?

### *Proletarian Hegemony Wrongly Understood*

In combating the argument of Nageswar Rao who put forward the argument that the present stage of revolution corresponded to that between February and October—

\* The Present Stage and Strategy of Indian Revolution—Is It Socialist or New Democratic? (mimeo), 9 July 1948.

† What is the Present Stage of the Indian Revolution and What Must Be Our Strategic Slogans? (mimeo)—Dissenting Note of P. Sundarayya (Nageswar Rao).

‡ On People's Democracy, see the next document in this volume.

the stage of proletarian revolution—the secretariat says the following:

"The proletarian hegemony, i.e. the ideological and programmatic leadership was consistent throughout these three stages in the Russian revolution. But actually the realisation of the dictatorship of the proletariat was only at the end of the second stage, though it was complete in its entirety after the exclusion of the left socialist-revolutionaries from the government. Hence it has to be borne in mind that proletarian hegemony is distinctly different from that of the proletarian dictatorship."

The secretariat in wanting to correct the mistakes of Nageswar Rao itself steps into a number of mistakes. If it had given a general warning not to mix hegemony at every stage of the revolution for the establishment of dictatorship of the proletariat, in relation to the past, it would have been correct. For instance hegemony in the democratic revolution and the state form corresponding to it should not be immediately mistaken for the dictatorship of the proletariat. But the secretariat contrasts hegemony in general with dictatorship and at least its formulation is such that it creates an impression that it fails to understand the link between hegemony of the proletariat in the struggle for revolution and the dictatorship of the proletariat, i.e. hegemony of the proletariat in the socialist state. Besides it characterises the conception of hegemony wrongly.

Is it correct in the first place to define proletarian hegemony as the "ideological and programmatic leadership..."? It is not only incorrect but amounts to rejection of the vanguard role of the party and the working class. For proletarian hegemony is not embodied in general ideological and programmatic leadership, but organisational leadership as well. It is anti-Leninist to define hegemony in the way it has been defined.

Leadership of the toilers, not only through programmatic and ideological leadership, but leadership in action, in struggle, of the toilers by the working class as a whole—

guided by the party—is a basic conception of proletarian hegemony, according to the Leninist-Stalinist doctrines. To talk of only programmatic and ideological leadership is vulgarisation of the revolutionary concept of hegemony of the proletariat—a vulgarisation which sometimes originates from an incorrect understanding of the revolutionary theory. That a party basing itself on the ideology and programme of the proletariat will be able to give the peasants, whether such a party is able to move the entire working class to action or not, i.e. whether such a party secures the leadership of the whole working class in action or not, its own leadership is enough and that it is equal to proletarian hegemony in colonial conditions—such is the vulgarisation of the concept of proletarian hegemony put forward by the Andhra secretariat.

In any case the concept which reduces proletarian hegemony to programmatic and ideological leadership is wrong, as the following from Stalin's *History of the CPSU(B)* will show, where Stalin describes the hegemony in action:

" 'The idea of a general strike', the Petrograd police reported, 'is daily gaining new followers and is becoming as popular as it was in 1905.' . . .

"On 25 February (10 March) the whole of working-class Petrograd had joined the revolutionary movement. The political strikes in the districts merged into a general political strike of the whole city. Demonstrations and clashes with the police took place everywhere. Over the masses of workers floated red banners bearing the slogans: 'Down with the tsar!', 'Down with the war!' 'We want bread!'

"On the morning of 26 February (11 March) the political strike and demonstration began to assume the character of an uprising. The workers disarmed police and gendarmes and armed themselves. . . A most energetic and persistent drive was made to win over the troops, especially by the working women, who addressed themselves direct-

ly to the soldiers, fraternised with them and called upon them to help the people to overthrow the hated tsarist autocracy...

"The workers and soldiers who had risen in revolt began to arrest tsarist ministers and generals and to free revolutionaries from jail. The released political prisoners joined the revolutionary struggle.

"In the streets, shots were still being exchanged with police and gendarmes posted with machineguns in the attics of houses. But the troops rapidly went over to the side of the workers, and this decided the fate of the tsarist autocracy.

"When the news of the victory of the revolution in Petrograd spread to other towns and to the front, the workers and soldiers everywhere began to depose the tsarist officials.

"The February bourgeois-democratic revolution had won.

"The revolution was victorious because its vanguard was the working class which headed the movement of millions of peasants clad in soldiers' uniform demanding 'peace, bread and liberty'. It was the hegemony of the proletariat that determined the success of the revolution.

"The revolution was made by the proletariat. The proletariat displayed heroism; it shed its blood; it swept along with it the broadest masses of the toiling and poor population', wrote Lenin in the early days of the revolution.

"The first revolution, that of 1905, had prepared the way for the swift success of the second revolution, that of 1917.

"Without the tremendous class battles', Lenin wrote, 'and the revolutionary energy displayed by the Russian proletariat during the three years 1905-7, the second revolution could not possibly have been so rapid in the sense that its *initial* stage was completed in a few days.'

"Soviets arose in the very first days of the revolution. The victorious revolution rested on the support of the soviets of workers' and soldiers' deputies. The workers

and soldiers who rose in revolt created soviets of workers' and soldiers' deputies. The revolution of 1905 had shown that the soviets were organs of armed uprising and at the same time the embryo of a new revolutionary power. The idea of soviets lived in the minds of the workingclass masses, and they put it into effect as soon as tsardom was overthrown, with this difference, however, that in 1905 it was soviets only of *workers'* deputies that were formed, whereas in February 1917, on the initiative of the bolsheviks, there arose soviets of *workers'* and *soldiers'* deputies."

Such is the Leninist-Stalinist conception of proletarian hegemony—not just programmatic and ideological leadership—but hegemony in struggle, in battle, in giving new forms of struggle and decisiveness in battle, courageous leadership in action which is able to organise the millions of toilers for a struggle and inspire other toilers to join the ranks of revolutionaries. It is this hegemony that gave the general strike—the proletarian weapon, that also gave the soviet—the new organ of struggle and form of proletarian state.

Secondly, is it true that proletarian hegemony was consistent throughout the three stages? This is wholly incorrect. The Bolshevik Party, the vanguard of the working class, was no doubt placing a correct programme and ideology before the class and the peasantry. But it had to continuously fight for the acceptance of the programme, against the vacillations of peasantry, against opportunist parties. If hegemony of the proletariat was a fact—from where came the critical period between February and October when the peasantry had almost handed over the power to the bourgeoisie, when the working class had to organise the October revolution? The Andhra secretariat comrades forget accepted facts of history of revolution—facts which should be known to everybody. The fact is that there was persistent struggle for hegemony, the working class after great efforts succeeded in carrying the peasantry on decisive issues, but the peasantry again

vacillated (for instance even after the formation of soviets, power was practically handed over to the bourgeoisie—the faith in the constituent assembly etc.) till finally the hegemony was fully established during and after October. The expression of this firm establishment of hegemony was to be seen in the dictatorship of the proletariat which expresses the firm hegemony of the proletariat in the state.

Is it correct then to draw a distinction between hegemony and dictatorship, in the way the secretariat does? It is impermissible and anti-Leninist. It should be clearly understood that hegemony in the struggle for proletarian revolution ripens into hegemony in the state—which is the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Stalin in his *History of the CPSU(B)* explains the link between hegemony in the various stages of the revolution and the dictatorship of the proletariat:

"According to this theory the hegemony of the proletariat in the bourgeois revolution, the proletariat *being in alliance* with the peasantry, would grow into the hegemony of the proletariat in the socialist revolution, the proletariat now *being in alliance* with the other labouring and exploited masses, while the democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry would prepare the ground for the socialist dictatorship of the proletariat."

Explaining the dictatorship of the proletariat as a special type of alliance, Stalin stresses the leading role, the hegemony of the proletariat in the state:

"The West-European social-democrats held that in the socialist revolution the proletariat would stand *alone*, against the *whole* bourgeoisie, *without* allies, against *all* the nonproletarian classes and strata. They would not take account of the fact that capital exploits not only the proletarians but also the semiproletarian millions of town and country, who are crushed by capitalism and who may become allies of the proletariat in the struggle for the emancipation of society from the capitalist yoke. The West-European social-democrats therefore held that conditions

were not yet ripe for a socialist revolution in Europe, that the conditions could be considered ripe only when the proletariat became the majority of the nation, the majority of society, as a result of the further economic development of society.

"This spurious, antiproletarian standpoint of the West-European social-democrats was completely upset by Lenin's theory of the socialist revolution.

"Lenin's theory did not yet contain any direct conclusion regarding the possibility of a victory of socialism in one country, taken singly. But it did contain all, or nearly all, the fundamental elements necessary for the drawing of such a conclusion sooner or later."

And in the *Problems of Leninism*, Stalin says:

"The special form of alliance consists in that the guiding force of this alliance is the proletariat. The special form of alliance consists in that the leader in the state, the leader in the system of the dictatorship of the proletariat is one party, the party of the proletariat, the party of the communists, which does not share that leadership with other parties."

And again quoting from his own pamphlet on *October Revolution and the Tactics of the Russian Communists*, Stalin says:

"The dictatorship of the proletariat is the class alliance between the proletariat and the labouring masses of the peasantry, for the overthrowing of capital, for achieving the final victory of socialism, on the condition that the guiding force of all this alliance is the proletariat."

Here again the guiding role, the hegemony is emphasised.

The Andhra secretariat would have been justified in saying that every participation of the proletariat in state is not necessarily dictatorship of the proletariat, that the dictatorship emerges only when the proletariat secures complete hegemony in the state, prepared for by its leadership of the peasant masses, when inside the state it does not share power with any other class. But instead they contrast hegemony against the dictatorship. In any case it

is impermissible to contrast hegemony against the dictatorship of the proletariat in this way.

Equally wrong is the formulation made in connection with another problem connected with the Russian revolution. For instance take the following:

"For example, besides a number of leading comrades, Dr Adhikari himself, in his speech at the Andhra party conference, made such a reference and compared the present national government with that of the Kerensky government. Subsequently a comrade from the session sent a question asking for clarification, whether it is correct to bring in such a parallel and whether similar objective conditions exist in presentday India. Comrade Adhikari without going into the deep implications of it explained it away by saying that a dual power came into existence in the shape of the soviets of soldiers' and workers' deputies, whereas in India the revolutionary forces are far from such a stage of organisational strength and achievement. As a matter of fact, the broad fact of the existence of a dual power had little to do in deciding the then stage and strategy of the period. Even supposing such a dual power was absent, could the CPSU(B) then have advanced any other slogan except the 'socialistic dictatorship of the proletariat and poor peasantry'. Our answer is and must be 'NO' and absolutely not. There the fundamental question was the question of political power which was in the hands of the bourgeoisie and it was the task of the proletariat to overthrow the bourgeoisie and take power into the hands of the proletariat in alliance with the poor peasantry."

The Andhra secretariat here misses the main fundamental link between the two stages of Russian revolution, between the two strategic objectives of the two periods. In fact it misses the entire essence of Leninism and Leninist lead in the Russian revolution.

It fails to understand the significance of the dual power, and comes to the conclusion that the power was in the hands of the bourgeoisie, and therefore no other slogan except the one of the socialistic dictatorship of the proleta-



riat and poor peasantry can be given. They thus miss the significance of the revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of workers and peasants that was established on the overthrow of the tsar.

The two components of dual power were: (1) The revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of workers and peasants which was the real source of power; (2) the bourgeois provisional government to which the former was transferring power. The former was the strategic objective of the proletariat led by the Bolshevik Party since 1905. Lenin repeatedly stressed the fact that only the proletariat could lead the democratic revolution, that it alone in alliance with the peasantry could overthrow the tsar, and that the revolution must lead to a revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of workers and peasants. And just because only the proletariat can lead it, and because the overwhelming mass of peasants must support it, it will pass over quickly into socialist revolution. The fact that after reaching the strategic objective of the first stage—the power passed into the hands of the bourgeoisie was due, as Lenin explains, to the insufficient class-consciousness of the masses, including sections of the working class.

What did the existence of the democratic dictatorship signify? It signified that at one sweep the revolution went out of the bounds of the ordinary bourgeois revolution, that it had become ripe for the next stage, that it had brought to the forefront classes who by making a firm alliance could take it to the next stage—the proletarian stage etc. Thus the existence of democratic dictatorship of workers and peasants was the vital factor in enabling the proletariat to raise the slogans of the next stage. Anyone who reads the *History of the CPSU(B)* or Lenin's writings would not make such a horrifying formulation that the broad fact of the existence of dual power had little to do in deciding the third stage and the strategy of the period. The democratic dictatorship signified that the transitional state form had already been reached and the next step forward must be taken. It showed the completion of the bourgeois-democra-

tic revolution in one of its vital aspects—the state. That is why the next stage could be only the socialist dictatorship of working class and poor peasantry. There is no need to argue on the hypothetical case whether, if Kerensky had come to power and there had been no soviets, the slogan of the dictatorship of working class and poor peasantry could have been given or not. All that one can say is such a slogan can be given only when it is justified by existing class relations—whether the role of other intermediary classes and parties has been fully exhausted. The main fact in the Andhra argument, however, is that they miss the revolutionary significance of democratic dictatorship of workers and peasants, its existence as a transitional state form, and fail to see its link with the strategic objective of the next stage, fail to see that it itself was the strategic objective of the earlier period, linking the democratic revolution with the socialist revolution.

Sometimes the Andhra secretariat argues as if Russia was an industrially-developed country—i.e. in a category quite different from presentday India—and therefore the experience of Russia did not apply so much to India. This of course is wrong. In the first place the sixth congress of the Communist International in its programme for the world as well as colonies like India did rely on the Russian experience, on the Leninist strategy, and developed for India the strategic objective of democratic dictatorship of workers and peasants.

Secondly, it is wrong to regard or put forward Russia as an advanced industrial country, qualitatively in a different category than India. In fact Russia was economically backward. The fact of there being heavier concentration of workers per industrial unit than even in America is sometimes wrongly equated to advanced industrial development of the country as a whole. When Stalin refers to this fact in his *Leninism* he only draws attention to the fact that this concentration helped the bolsheviks to organise the workers all the more speedily. Indicating the several reasons for this comparatively easy victory of the

socialist revolution in Russia, Stalin in his *History of the CPSU(B)* mentions the first reason as follows:

"The October revolution was confronted by an enemy so comparatively weak, so badly organised, and so politically inexperienced as the Russian bourgeoisie. *Economically still weak, and completely dependent on government contracts, the Russian bourgeoisie lacked sufficient political selfreliance and initiative to find a way out.*"

It should be understood that whatever differences there might be between the industrial development in India and Russia before the Russian revolution, they are not of a qualitative character and that the entire experience of the Russian revolution is fully valid in the case of India also. And secondly it is wrong to present Russia as an industrially advanced country. The testimony of the leaders of Russian revolution points in the other direction.

### *Reformist Postulates of the Andhra Document*

These basically wrong conceptions and fundamentally revisionist notions about the Russian revolution are not unconnected with the reformist policy and line advocated by the Andhra secretariat. They form the theoretical groundwork to deduce the reformist outline.

As will be seen below these wrong conclusions form a link in the chain of reasoning which leads to opportunist conclusions. If one were to present the various provisions of the Andhra secretariat's line, they would be somewhat as follows:

Wanting to make out a case for collaboration with the rich peasants, or 'neutralisation', the secretariat has unconsciously developed the following line of argument:

(1) Rich peasants are fought only when proletarian revolution is on the agenda (here the secretariat and Nageswar Rao agree). For an instance they point out to the Russian revolution.

(2) Proletarian revolution is organised when bourgeoisie is in power—for instance Kerensky, they say.

(3) But in India bourgeoisie is not in power, since the colonial setup, which they practically reduce to the same old kind of imperialist domination, remains.

(4) The revolution in India being revolution in semi-colonial conditions and the bourgeoisie only sharing power—it is a bourgeois-democratic revolution, new democratic revolution, but not a proletarian revolution—hence the rich peasants cannot be fought. Not only the rich peasants, but also other sections of middle bourgeoisie can be neutralised—considering that only the big business is collaborating.

(5) The next stage of the Indian revolution is supposed to be new democratic—whose class content however is not defined, so that the rich experience of democratic dictatorship of workers and peasants can be ignored. In so far as the new democracy is defined, it is done so from opportunist quotations from Mao as 'dictatorship of many classes'—not specially of workers and peasants and toiling petty bourgeoisie—which formulation may therefore mean that sections of the bourgeoisie are also included in the government.

Thus we come back to the old mutton. Joshi and the old CC were guilty of transforming the party and the working class into an appendage of the bourgeoisie by asking them to follow the national leadership which was supposed to represent the people and whose class character was forgotten.

The Andhra secretariat wants to achieve the same thing after the party congress by advocating collaboration with rich peasants, middle bourgeoisie, in the name of neutralisation, i.e. a basic strategy based on difference between big business and the other sections—based on collaboration with certain sections of the bourgeoisie in the name of neutralisation. For this purpose they have borrowed the formulation from Mountbatten resolution—only big business is collaborationist.

That this is not a harsh judgment can be seen from the following. It will then be found that the Andhra secreta-

riat differs from the party congress on every issue including the international situation.

### *Reformist Understanding of the World Situation!*

Revealing as it may seem, the Andhra secretariat does not accept the fact of the division of the world into two camps—of the line laid down by Cominform, by Comrade Zhdanov. On the other hand it presents a reformist understanding of world situation giving first importance to conflicts and competitions among the bourgeoisie and bases the entire strategy of class alliance on it. Read the following:

"Firstly, the international background that was present on the eve of October when compared to the present which forms the background of our revolution is totally a different one. Lenin analysed thus: 'Monopoly capitalism and imperialism is capitalism in permanent crisis. Imperialism is the dying form of capitalism.' This is the feature present in the beginning of the 20th century which forms the background of Russian revolution. But today imperialism from that stage of 'beginning its end' has reached a stage which can be characterised as 'imperialism on death-bed'. World imperialism today has been stuck up in a crisis more deep and intense than in the early period of 20th century. It can today either exist in the shape of semi-fascism or fascism or get smashed under the advancing tide of the world revolution. Imperialism after the two world wars had been so weakened as we find it today that the feature of its warring camps had been ended. Today there is only the mighty colossal American imperialism dominant of the world imperialisms. All other capitalist states in one way or other, while they are struggling for existence, had gone under the wings of the mighty American imperialism. The crisis of world imperialism can be best seen when we observe the present Truman's American expansionism. American imperialism faced with the unheard-of crisis, is bent upon not only keeping colonies and

semicolonies under its domination but steadily advancing step by step to reduce other independent capitalist states as its colonies. This parasitic feature of rapidly devouring the weaker sections of its own species has got tremendous bearing on the course of the presentday world. Monopoly capitalism today has been so naked an enemy not only of socialistic democracy but also of 'bourgeois democracy'. It is out not only to destroy the toiling and working masses but also to devour a section of its own class, the small bourgeoisie. Thus in the presentday international background we find imperialism in its last stages, caught in the grip of a crisis so deep, so extensive and unheard-of."

This quotation, this understanding of the international situation, is the key to understanding of the reformist outlook of the Andhra secretariat. After repeating a lot of phrases about imperialist crisis, world crisis, what is the major conclusion drawn? Not the conclusion of two camps of imperialism and the people, of the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, but the first conclusion is that imperialism is devouring certain sections of the bourgeoisie which is supposed to have a tremendous bearing. In fact out of our own analysis of the international situation, this is the maior and only conclusion drawn by the Andhra secretariat, a conclusion which enables it later on to recommend that certain sections of the bourgeoisie, especially rich peasants, must be treated gently.

This reading only means that the proletariat must ally itself on a world scale with 'oppressed' bourgeois section, with the section 'threatened' by American imperialism—a shamefaced theory of class-collaboration.

This understanding has nothing in common with the political thesis of the second congress of our party nor with the Cominform. This is how the second congress thesis puts it:\* "The defeat of Hitler Germany and fascist Japan...insuperable obstacles in the shape of people struggling for freedom."

"The close of the antifascist war has thus led... majority in UNO as a bloc against the democratic nations."

Not two camps, but reliance, and basic reliance at that, on the increased competition among the bourgeoisie—not reliance on the revolutionary contradiction between the people and imperialism, between the workers and the bourgeoisie, but on the conflicts among the bourgeoisie: such is the international understanding of the situation of the Andhra secretariat which is but an attempt to tie the proletariat to one of the sections of the bourgeoisie. This formulation also makes it clear that when the Andhra secretariat talks of neutralisation it actually advocates collaboration and surrender; otherwise it would not have called the 'devouring of smaller capitalists' as having as tremendous importance on world situation and excluded the contradiction between the people and imperialism, between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie.

Equally opportunist and reformist is the reading on the question of the significance of the USSR and the new democracies and the proletarian movement—of the shift in the balance of power in the world. The Andhra secretariat commits the unforgivable crime of not only underestimating the strength of the camp of socialism and democracy, as a result of the second world war, but practically ignores it, and argues as if the second world war has not taken place, the world communist parties have not grown, the Chinese liberation struggle has not dealt a heavy blow to imperialism, the colonial revolutionary struggles have not taken place. All this serves the purpose of belittling the people's forces, in the name of new democracy and makes out a case for collaboration. Read the following:

"The second aspect of the special feature of the international situation which forms the background of our present revolution today is coming into existence of Soviet Union. October revolution and its achievements during the last 30 years have changed the very course of world development and influenced the wide strata of people. Before October revolution, the doctrines of Marx and

Engels which were considered by many intellectuals as utopian, have not only been demonstrated in practice the practicability of Marxist-Leninist doctrines, but consolidated socialism on one-sixth of the surface of the earth. In contrast to decaying capitalism in all its spheres, the Soviet world has emerged as the real champion of democracy and an all-round progress. This effective growth and consolidation of the October revolution has profound influence on sections of the peasantry, urban petty bourgeoisie and intellectuals who were previously considered as the reserves of the bourgeoisie. Socialist world has not only become the hope of the toiling masses of the world but of the entire progressive mankind who crave for peace, who strive for national independence and aspire for progress. All genuine scientists, artists, educationists, look towards Soviet Union for real advance. Peasantry in the world as a whole, which once got land from the feudal landlords with the help of bourgeoisie, has been steadily realising that in the present context of the world today, it is the proletariat that can give them land but not the bourgeoisie which is already played out and joined hands with feudalism. The existence of a socialist world forms an effective background for our revolution which makes the vital contribution in deciding different aspects of the revolution."

The last sentence sums up the reformist understanding, the total underestimation of the people's camp. The balance against the bourgeoisie has not decisively changed: the revolutionary conflicts have not put on the agenda the defeat of the capitalist order; the new revolutions are not being fought under conditions when the people's forces, the forces of socialism are decisively a stronger than the forces of the capitalist order. All that has happened is "The existence of the socialist world forms an effective background for our revolution which makes the vital contribution in deciding different aspects of our revolution"—it only is an effective background—this sums up the understanding completely.



Such is the fundamental difference between the international outlook of the second party congress and the outlook of the Andhra secretariat.

The political thesis bases itself on the intensified contradictions—the major contradictions between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, on the immensely increased strength of the forces of socialism. While it takes account of the increased conflict of capitalism and imperialism, it at the same time lays down that the new basic elements are two camps—the camp of the bourgeoisie, of imperialism, against the camp of socialism, of the working class, of democracy, the people. The Andhra secretariat because it denies the existence of two camps, bases itself primarily on the increased conflict among the bourgeoisie and thus makes out a case for collaboration with one section of the bourgeoisie when all sections are united in organising a world front of capital against labour. The document of the Andhra secretariat, when it talks about the Soviet, paraphrases the estimate which Stalin gave about the consequences of Russian revolution 25 years ago and do not go beyond them—do not see the great shift in the balance of forces reached since then.

Obviously the international outlook revealed in the Andhra secretariat document is open repudiation of both the thesis and Zhdanov's statement before the nine communist parties' conference.

Need we then wonder that with this outlook, the secretariat should write the following about India:

"Whereas in the presentday India, by the Mountbatten award and the subsequent formation of the so-called national government, nothing has been smashed of the imperialist-feudal state machinery, but simply political power is being shared by the dominant bourgeoisie. It is not the entire capitalist class that gets benefited by this compromise but only the big-business houses that have entered into deals with the British capitalists. Not to speak of the toiling masses, the middle bourgeoisie will also be devoured as the economic crisis develops."

Thus we have again returned to the Mountbatten position. Only big business is compromising and collaborating. The middle bourgeoisie since it is not supposed to gain by this collaboration is presumably to be collaborated with or at least 'neutralised', i.e. which in the context it is being used means not fight. In actual fact the secretariat is advocating collaboration with the middle bourgeoisie, as is clear from the quotation from Mao which it uses and which defines new democracy as united dictatorship of several classes—a definition which does not exclude the bourgeoisie.

This is one more a shamefaced apology to ally with some other sections of the bourgeoisie than say Tata and Birla, but sections which fundamentally follow the same policy. The thesis nowhere makes such a formulation but the Andhra secretariat makes it with the realisation that it is taking a stand which is nothing but the rejection of the political thesis.

### *Only 'Big Business' Gone Over—A Reformist Formulation*

These formulations firstly follow logically from the reformist outlook on international developments.

Secondly, they unmask the real meaning of the seemingly radical phrase 'nothing has changed'—the old setup continues etc.; for such a position makes it straight plump for one or the other section of the bourgeoisie. For it is a logical conclusion that if nothing has changed, if only a narrow section of the bourgeoisie finds it to its interests to collaborate and defend the new state, if the other sections are not interested in defending the new government and state, because of their economic conditions—then one or the other section of the bourgeoisie does play an oppositional role and is capable of appealing to the masses as in the old way. The Andhra secretariat is making out a case that some sections of the bourgeoisie are still playing an oppositional role—otherwise there is no mean-

ing in emphasising the so-called conflict of the middle bourgeoisie with the collaborationists.

Is it true that nothing has changed? It is untrue. To say this is to underestimate the great revolutionary ferment that shook India in 1946-47. The political thesis correctly lays down that the Mountbatten award is a cunning offensive; it is not an advance but a retreat, the form of domination has changed—all these are correct characterisations in relation to the demands of the revolutionary movement, to the demands of the masses.

At the same time in relation to the gains of the bourgeoisie, the political thesis states that "imperialism makes big concessions to the bourgeoisie and hands it over governmental power to rule the Indian people in its own narrow selfish interests. At the same time the state it has won is a dependent on imperialism" etc.\* This is how imperialism has forged a new alliance and relies on the bourgeoisie to defend the old order. The state can only be managed by the bourgeoisie with its big social base. This big concession is made. At the same time its weak economic position, its fear of world communism, of the Soviet, is utilised and exploited to tie it to the apron-strings of imperialism. The bourgeoisie has got unlimited freedom to exploit its own people; at the same time the economic development is dependent on political bargains and needs of world capitalist order.

The point to be noted is that the bourgeoisie has improved its position, it has secured direct control of the state, unlimited freedom to exploit, which makes it a ferocious defender of the state and collaborator of imperialism.

It logically follows from this that it is not only 'big business' but the entire bourgeoisie that is interested in defending the new state—collaborationist state. Why? Because all of them realise that they have unlimited opportunities to exploit the people, that any conflict between

the people and themselves will be solved under the state in their own interests.

Secondly, the limitations placed upon economic development through its satellite character are in their opinion questions of bargaining for which their power has developed because of their possession of the new state.

Thirdly, they are not thinking in terms of competition and conflict only, but more in terms of collaboration against world communism and the Soviet Union.

Fourthly, they know they cannot get a state which is equally antimass and at the same time completely free from imperialist strings.

Fifthly, the Andhra secretariat always forgets the basic class contradictions and bases itself only on the increased conflict of the bourgeoisie. It is obvious that even if some sections of the bourgeoisie do not get enough benefit, or let us say not much out of the present state etc. can they think in terms of an alternative, of altogether a new type? Can they really take a challenging stand to the present collaborationist state? They dare not. For the alternative to it is people's democratic state and not another form of capitalist state. That is why even the disgruntled elements cannot go beyond constitutional opposition and an attempt to take possession of the government through constitutional means, while always ready to protect the state against the people, against communists.

The Andhra secretariat forgets the dominant contradictions between the exploited people and the capitalists. the challenge of world communism and the consequent position taken by world capitalism—the international front of capital, and hopes to base its strategy on the differences among capitalists, when all of them are united, in spite of the differences, against their enemy, the working class. The working class no doubt takes advantage of whatever differences that might exist among different sections of the bourgeoisie, not to rely on any section, but to discredit and expose both. In the present period it can-

not base its strategy on these differences, and forget as the Andhra secretariat does, the main basic contradiction between the working class and the bourgeoisie. The Andhra documents see the effect of economic crisis, collaboration etc., only on certain sections of the bourgeoisie, and forget the masses; they forget these same crises and collaboration intensify the contradiction between the people and the bourgeoisie a hundredfold, leading to an open war between the two. It thus leads to an advocacy of alliance in one form or another with sections of the exploiting bourgeoisie, and in the name of this alliance, of this broad front, effectively tie down the working class to the apron-strings of the bourgeoisie.

### *Abjuring Struggle Against Rich Peasants*

The logical result of this analysis can be nothing else. In fact this is the strategy which is openly advocated by the documents. The main purpose of the documents is to abjure the fight against rich peasant, to build an alliance with him (this also is openly advocated in certain circumstances). No doubt the documents talk generally of "neutralisation in respect of an enemy who has to be openly fought and routed"—neutralisation becomes the banner of class-collaboration with the enemy. Read the following:

"Because the present stage of the revolution is the new democratic stage, not socialist stage, the middle peasant is a firm ally in the revolution who participates in the revolution. The rich peasant who has no feudal tails can be neutralised as a class but in areas like Telangana and Rayalseema, where feudalism is very strong, it is even possible to get sections of rich peasantry in the struggle (though vacillating).

"In the matter of procurement of paddy, the secretariat believes that it is possible to neutralise the rich peasants as the government plan goes against the rich peasantry also. Though the rich peasantry as a class is not standing firmly in the fight, it is parting with paddy with dissatis-

faction. When we are able to mobilise they are with the general mass of the peasantry.

"Regarding the demands of agricultural labour, the secretariat is of the opinion that it is wrong to import mechanically relations between a capitalist and an industrial worker into the village life where small-peasant economy is dominant. It only disrupts the new democratic front, also does not get the demands of the agricultural labourers satisfied, because this mechanical outlook will drive the poor and the middle peasant into the fold of the rich peasant. So the demands of the agricultural labourers are so formulated that they will not disrupt the new democratic front, but bring the poor and middle peasants to the side of the agricultural labour.

"And again, the lumping of the rich peasantry into a single category without any discrimination between the section which is 'able to shake off their tails of feudalism' and those who are 'not able to do' so—they characterise the entire rich peasantry as counterrevolutionary: they even do not concede the idea that a section of them can be neutralised in this democratic revolution. They do not concede that at least in the feudal areas like Telangana the rich peasant can be taken along with liberation struggle in this stage. Today the reality that is demonstrated on this front is a concrete proof against this formulation and a good section of it is coming with us in the liberation struggle."

This constitutes the real practical gist of the documents. a programme of class-collaboration in rural areas, of bowing down before the rich peasant. It must be admitted in this connection that if Andhra comrades felt confused and perplexed over the question of the rich peasant, the fault was not entirely theirs. The party congress thesis has not made any special analysis of the rich peasant. It is however equally true that if the Andhra comrades had attempted to apply correctly the line given in the thesis

they would never have reached the conclusions which amount to surrender to the rich peasant.

About the role of the rich peasant and the attitude that we had to take towards him, the PB has dealt with these questions in the documents on the agrarian question and people's democracy.\* These documents reveal that the stand taken by the Andhra comrades is wrong—that the phrase borrowed from Mao about rich peasants with no feudal tails, and applied mechanically without an estimate of class relations, only serves the purpose of protecting the rich peasant who along with the landlord is the enemy of the rural masses.

In fact the Andhra comrades are attempting to furnish belated ideological justification for the utterly reformist line that the party adopted in the kisan movement in the period of reformism. That period led to our basing ourselves on middle peasants, allowing ourselves to be influenced by the rich peasants, and in the name of rural unity keeping down the struggle of the agricultural workers and poor peasants, keeping down their leading role—an exact replica of united national front in rural areas.

The results of this were seen in Andhra when repression started in the province.

Starting with the talk of neutralisation, when the rich peasant is to be fought as one of the enemies, the document immediately talks about the possibility of securing the rich peasant as an ally in Telangana where feudalism is strong. From neutrality you straight come to alliance under the pretext that rich peasants in areas where feudalism is strong can play an active antifeudal role in the struggle for democratic revolution. Once more an absurd reliance on conflicts and differences among the exploiting classes and not seeing their common interests in exploiting the masses. How can rich peasants, even in feudal areas, really play an antifeudal role when the entire bour-

\* See the next two documents in this volume.

geoisie wants to compromise and enter into an alliance against the masses; when their leader the industrial bourgeoisie has signed a new alliance with feudalism and when consistently fighting against the feudal elements creates danger for the rich peasants also at the hands of the masses? How can all this happen when the class-antagonism between the exploiters and the exploited has reached such higher proportions?

The documents say that this has been proved in Telangana. In reality no such proof exists. It must be remembered that what the documents say is not just some sympathy of rich peasants in partial struggles now and then and in the initial stage—which is quite conceivable, just as one factory owner may sometimes support financially etc. the strikers of another rival factory—what it lays down is the vacillating support of the rich peasants in the political struggle—in the democratic revolution.

It thus becomes that in the name of this neutralisation it is the proletariat which has to support the rich peasant in his selfish aims and not that the latter has to support the proletariat in its revolutionary struggle. For instance anyone would see that the resistance of the rich peasant to procurement has nothing in common with the revolutionary opposition to it of the poor peasants etc. The demand of the proletariat is not support to the rich peasants' war on the exploited in the name of supporting his antigovernment activities but demand that all his surplus stuff should be confiscated or taken over, while nothing should be taken from those who have no surplus. But the secretariat advocates support of rich peasant's opposition to procurement of surplus stuff, to his plan of black-marketing his stock. The Andhra secretariat which bases itself on the conflict between the middle bourgeoisie and big business, lands in practice to the support of the policy of blackmarketing by rich peasants, to the support of one section of exploiters against another. It makes the proletariat the camp-follower of one section of the bourgeoisie.



If every action of opposition to the government is to be applauded as progressive, then one may easily support the conspiracies of capitalists to defeat control of prices etc.

### *Letting Down Agricultural Workers' Struggles*

And after this the exploiters are openly supported against the exploited. It is known to all that the reformism of the past six years has meant the abjuration of the struggle of agricultural labourers in the interest of peasant unity and a slackening of the struggles of poor peasants. It meant the proletariat failed to organise the agricultural workers and surrender of the interests of the agricultural workers. A sharp attack has to be launched against this opportunist policy. But instead of this attack, in the name of peasant unity, the same policy of openly letting down the agricultural workers is advocated. In the name of this neutralisation it seems you are not to fight the rich peasant for the wage of the agricultural worker. The question is presented as if the struggles of the agricultural worker is only against the middle and poor peasant while the rich peasant, the main exploiter, is given an alibi by not mentioning him and in the name of keeping peasant unity, the unity of middle, poor peasant and agricultural worker—the struggle of the worker is to be slackened or abjured—with all the benefit naturally going to the rich peasant—for he is the main exploiter of agricultural labour.

In the past when the workers talked about nationalisation, the apologists of the capitalists would ask—what you are going to nationalise, the Singer sewing machine belonging to some poor old widow and thus make it appear that nationalisation would hit smaller sections? In similar fashion the Andhra secretariat when it talks about the wage of agricultural worker, only talks in relation to poor peasants and middle peasants, and not in relation to rich peasant—thus secreening the antagonism between the agricultural worker and rich peasant. This is how in the

interest of neutralisation class antagonisms are by-passed and interests of the masses let down.

It certainly is necessary to stress the importance of the unity of poor and middle peasants and agricultural workers. But it is imperative for a Marxist—first to emphasise that the struggle of the agricultural workers for better wages, for living wage, must be carried on, at all costs, against the rich peasants, the main exploiter of the labourers. And then state since some middle and poor peasants also employ labour, it is necessary to make them understand the importance of this struggle in their own interests, as part of their struggle itself. This is quite different from what the Andhra documents are saying.

### *Middle Peasant not a 'Firm' Ally*

The formulation that the 'middle peasant is a firm ally in the revolution' and that the rich peasant 'with no feudal tails' is to be 'neutralised' is nothing but the ideological cloak for the worst reformist policy pursued in the kisan movement—the policy of basing the peasant movement on middle peasants, of collaboration with rich peasants, and neutralisation of the poor peasants and agricultural labourers. Instead of basing itself on the agrarian workers and poor peasants—the policy in reality bases itself on middle peasants and collaboration with the rich. It is totally untrue to say that the middle peasant is a firm ally in the revolution. He is a vacillating ally—and his vacillations in our revolution are going to be very big—as has been shown in the document on people's democracy. The rich peasant has to be combated as one of the main exploiters of the peasant mass, of agricultural labour. He is an enemy who is in the other camp. The refusal of the secretariat to see the class-differentiation in the countryside ends in advocating class-collaboration and suggesting a strategy based on the conception that the entire peasantry, rich as well as poor and middle—with the exception of only those who are unable to shake off the

tails of feudalism—which means that the entire peasantry including capitalist rich farmers are revolutionary classes throughout the period of people's democratic revolution. It is incredible, but it is true that the Andhra secretariat solemnly proclaims the rich peasant to be a revolutionary throughout the period of 'new democratic revolution'. This is what it writes:

"Main force of the revolution: workers both rural and industrial; immediate reserves: peasants in general with the exception of those rich farmers who are unable to shake off their tails of feudalism; and poor and middle peasants in particular remain as immediate reserves throughout this stage of new democratic revolution."

Compare this with the class-combination given in the document on people's democracy—for the overthrow of landlordism, against the rich peasants, with the middle peasant as a vacillating ally. The Andhra formula is not one of relying on the basic fighting masses—the agricultural worker and poor peasant—who alone under the leadership of the proletariat can act as the driving force of the agrarian revolution, but of surrendering them to the middle peasants and rich peasants and erecting a strategy based on the interests of these classes—which can only end in abject surrender. For when you consider a vacillating ally to be a firm ally, and when you certify your class enemy as a revolutionary with whom you must seek alliance—such an alliance can only come on the terms of your enemy and in the name of this alliance, this peasant unity, you surrender one fighting position after another, thinking you are advancing the cause of revolution. This is plainly seen even in the formulation when even the agricultural workers' struggle for elementary demands is cautioned against. How much more will be the surrender when revolutionary conflict really starts?!

### *Mechanical Application of Stages of Revolution*

Both Naweswar Rao and the secretariat have turned

Marxism upside down. Whoever has heard of deciding about the stage of the revolution in a country without concrete study of its class-relations? But they first decide that the stage must be this or that and then create amazing class-relations to suit the particular stage. The secretariat decided it is the stage of February revolution, since it does not want to fight the rich peasant—nothing has changed—only big business gone over, new democratic revolution carried as only antifeudal etc. Nageswar Rao imagines another set of relations.

Both make a mockery of Marxism, by mechanically transferring the class-combinations obtaining at the two stages of Russian revolution, to the Indian situation, without asking whether in view of the fact that three decades of revolutionary struggle have passed since the October revolution, that the second world war has completely altered the balance of class-forces in the country—there is any chance of the stages getting intertwined, of class-relations getting mixed, of the class-combinations of one stage being combined with some of the combinations of the next stage. Thus the entire revolutionary essence of the Russian experience is missed in its mechanical application.

It was and is no doubt correct to have discussed the experience of the two stages of the revolution—that experience is one of the rich heritages of international Marxism, but it cannot be discussed apart from the class-relations obtaining at any given time. Only when studied in relation to the concrete class-relations the rich experience yields a rich harvest.

Lenin showed that actual life produces a variety of combinations and not an exact replica of the past. The class-combinations obtaining in one country in the revolution are not exactly reproduced in another country at another time simply because the stage of the revolution itself gets more or less intertwined with the next stage, because the class-combinations get mixed etc. A rigid mechanical expectation to see in Indian conditions an exact replica of

the position of various classes at the two stages of the Russian revolution leads to comic effects and wrong conclusions.

The logical conclusion of the Andhra documents is to justify collaboration with all nonfeudal exploiters—the biggest of them. This of course even the advocates of the documents dare not do. Therefore they try to narrow down the scope of their collaboration, by defining the rich peasant as one having an income of Rs 1000 to Rs 2000. "Rest of those whose annual income exceeds Rs 2000—*generally* come under the category of landlords, with varying degrees of difference, no matter whether they are feudal exploiters or modern entrepreneurs on capitalist lines." Thus through this definition an attempt is made to repudiate the logical conclusions of the line—by just defining certain sections as landlords; distinguishing them from rich peasants. There is no reason for this distinction—but it has to be made; otherwise the secretariat realises the whole policy reveals as openly collaborationist with the most ruthless exploiters. However mere definition will not enable the authors to escape the logical conclusion of their policy in practice for the whole thing is based on a wrong understanding of the role of the new capitalist exploiter in the village.

How carelessly and even wantonly the secretariat interprets Lenin is to be seen in their interpretation of Lenin's definition of various sections of peasantry in his draft theses on the agrarian question submitted to the second congress of the Communist International. There Lenin in defining the various categories primarily lays emphasis on the hiring of labour—and on the role played by hired labour in the production of each category. And this is the comment of the Andhra secretariat on Lenin's definition: "Here we find from Lenin that in his definition and classification of the peasantry the main running thread throughout is seen as the basis of income one gets or in other words sufficiency or insufficiency to his family and farm." Can distortion go further?

Finally in support of its erroneous policies the Andhra secretariat quotes certain passages from Mao Tse-tung. Firstly, read the following: "Marxism is not a dogma. It is a science which provides us with guiding lines of action. Since the October revolution, in this long period of more than thirty years, mighty revolutionary struggles in different countries, colonies, and semicolonies have been taking place. They present us varied experience and rich lessons. These are most valuable theoretical lessons deduced and added to the armoury of Marxism-Leninism in this period. Mao, the leader of the historic Chinese liberation struggle, from his unique and rich experience and study, has formulated a theory of new democracy. This is a new form of revolutionary struggle to advance towards socialism in colonies and semicolonies. Mao advanced new democracy as distinct from the dictatorship of the proletariat."

*Authoritative Sources of Marxism—Only Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin*

Firstly, we must state emphatically that the CPI has accepted Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin as the authoritative sources of Marxism. It has not discovered new sources of Marxism beyond these. Nor for the matter of that is there any communist party which declares adherence to the so-called theory of new democracy alleged to be propounded by Mao and declares it to be a new addition to Marxism. Singularly enough there was no reference to this new addition to Marxism in the conference of nine parties. Under these circumstances it is very wrong for a section of the CC leadership to take upon itself the task of recommending new discoveries which one of the most authoritative conference of Marxists has not thought fit to recommend. The Andhra secretariat should have thought, ten times before making such a formulation and taking an original stand on the question of this contribution. It is impermissible for communists to talk lightly about new discoveries, enrichment, because such claims have proved

too often to be a thin cloak for revisionism. (Tito, Browder, etc.).

Secondly, the documents of the Andhra secretariat quote Mao's old outlook on new democracy in support of its view but does not even mention by a word that a conference of leading communist parties including the CPSU(B) took place, that at that conference, Zhdanov submitted a report explaining the nature of people's democracies and that this conference was hailed as the opening of a new chapter in the struggle against capital. A very precise class character of people's democracy is given there—a characterisation which excludes the bourgeoisie from power. But all this does not find place in the document.

This is not the place to sit in judgment over the formulations of Comrade Mao in his *New Democracy*. At the same time since the Andhra secretariat quotes Mao against the understanding of world situation and people's democracies as given by Zhdanov and CPSU(B), it is necessary to examine some of the formulations.

### *Mao's Formulation of 'Promoting Capitalism'—Wrong*

It must be admitted that some of Mao's formulations are such that no communist party can accept them; they are in contradiction to the world understanding of the communist parties. Take the following horrifying formulation from Mao, quoted by the secretariat, and approvingly quoted, which throws a floodlight on what stand the secretariat wants to take:

"Some people cannot understand why the Communist Party of China, far from being unsympathetic to capitalism, actually promotes its development. What China does not want is foreign imperialism and native feudalism and not native capitalism which is too weak."

No Marxist can ever agree with this reactionary formulation. The CPI in its resolution passed by the second congress has correctly stated that the people's democracy which it wants to establish will confiscate all strategic industries, banks, etc., nationalise them, and drive out the

capitalists from key positions to eliminate capitalist order altogether in the shortest possible time.

Are we to suppose that while the revolutionary workers of France, Italy, England, the revolutionary masses of countries like India, the great USSR and eastern democracies are engaged in fighting world capitalism, the Communist Party of China proposes to rebuild capitalism on the soil of China? Are we to understand that capitalism which has ceased to play any progressive role is reassuming it on the soil of China? Are we to understand that we have returned, so far at least China is concerned, to the theory that socialism cannot be established without capitalism having run its full course in every country—at least in China, and revise the Leninist understanding about the colonies and backward countries going gradually to socialism without necessarily going through the rule of capital and capitalism. And is it not elementary Marxism that capitalism in its declining period never advances production but hampers it, leads to crisis, intense exploitation—and hence you cannot promote it? Is it not elementary Marxism further that if you undertake to promote capitalism you will be inevitably promoting the dictatorship of the capitalist class? It is elementary Marxism to know that the class which dominates economically will dominate politically and that a party which seeks to promote the rule of capital in economy will end in promoting the rule of capital on the state. One might also ask, has the Chinese proletariat and the people fought for a quarter century, undergone torture and sufferings, for promoting capitalism, the system of wage-slavery and unbridled exploitation? It is obvious that this promoting capitalism would mean promoting the rule of a fascist clique like Chiang's clique, for capitalism can only exist as fascism in China in presentday conditions.

It is obvious that this idea of promoting capitalism is reactionary and counterrevolutionary. It is at the same time clear that Mao, though he has made this loose formulation, at the same time combines it with other formulations.



For instance he repeatedly stresses that the new revolution, the Chinese revolution, is not of the old bourgeois type—and everyone knows that the old bourgeois type revolutions were precisely the revolutions which promoted capitalism.

The basis of the new democracy that he gives is such that in the hands of the revolutionary class it must become a weapon of squeezing out capitalism and not promoting it.

"In such a republic, all big banks, big industries and big commercial establishments must be state-owned. In order to ensure the freedom of people's livelihood from the influence of private profit, all the native-owned or foreign-owned enterprises, either monopolist-dominated or too large for a private effort—for instance banks, railroads, etc.—will be managed by and controlled by state alone. This is the essence and theory of control of capital."

It is clear that these weapons in the hands of a people's democracy do not lead to promoting capitalism but must lead to a gradual squeezing out of capitalist relations from one branch of production after another.

*People's Democracy: Instrument of Squeezing out, Not Promoting Capitalism*

While we need not go into the details, it must be emphasised that Mao in fighting polemically against certain deviations himself steps into new deviations. But he is right when he stresses that the Chinese revolution cannot, on the morrow of its success start building socialism by executive orders. For instance in a country dominated by small production in agriculture you cannot decree socialism and largescale agriculture the next day—for the simple reason that the means of production for largescale agriculture are not there and the majority of the small producers must be won over and convinced. This is nothing new. This is the lesson of the October revolution.

Also in such a country you cannot prohibit by decree on the morrow of the revolution all private trade, all private production in agriculture and industry—for the simple

reason that neither the means of 100 per cent social production are there, nor the majority of the small producers in agriculture can be won over in a single day.

Those who would apply introduction of socialism the next day would come into conflict with the vast masses of peasantry and play into the hands of the enemies of working class.

It is obvious that in these conditions when private production has to be tolerated it will continuously produce the relations and differentiations of capitalist society—for instance in a village some peasants may become rich etc. If left unchecked this will only mean capitalism. But the transitional character of the stage precisely comes from the fact that the state of the revolutionary masses holds both political and key economic power in its hands and uses them to check, curb and gradually squeeze out capitalist relations—by expanding production of nation-owned concerns, etc. Thus the stage becomes one of continuous struggle for squeezing out of capitalism—not promoting it. It is not yet socialism because private production is allowed. It is not capitalism because capitalism is being fought to destroy it, because the key positions are already in the hands of the revolutionary masses.

All this is again the experience of the Russian revolution. Mao confuses the toleration of commodity production, smallscale production, private production under the conditions of people's rule and nationalisation of big industries and banks—with promoting of capitalism and completely eliminates the transitional anticapitalist character of the economic order under people's democracy.

In India also immediately after people's democratic revolution smallscale private production especially in agriculture will continue for some time. It cannot be eliminated the next day. Also private production on other sectors might be tolerated. But the key economic positions will already be in the hands of the revolutionary masses and they will be used to fight and diminish the role of small-scale production and build nationalised production. In the

rural area in the beginning smallscale production may lead to certain differentiations among the peasants—some accumulating wealth and becoming rich peasants. But through wage legislation, trade legislation, they will be repeatedly curbed, will not be allowed to spread their net of exploitation and finally they will be eliminated when means of socialised agriculture are on hand. This is class struggle in a new form.

The fact that smallscale economy will persist in the transitional period, that it might give rise to the emergence of rich peasants temporarily—does not in the least mean that today we must not fight the rich peasants. Today as well as tomorrow the rich peasants are our enemies. They stand for the present state which we seek to overthrow. They are to be politically overthrown and defeated. They are to be economically fought—through agricultural workers' strikes etc. and their power of exploitation has to be undermined. Quick steps have to be taken to eliminate them as a class by promoting largescale socialised production. Meanwhile the proletariat has to remember that it cannot hope to eliminate the rich peasant just by a decree without eliminating the conditions which create him. It must therefore take persistent steps to fight him till such conditions are created and he is finally eliminated.

Mao, though he is right in stressing the fact that you cannot build socialism without long preparations, yet makes erroneous formulations.

The Andhra secretariat, while it gives quotations from Mao's book which was written five years back, is shy of even referring to Zhdanov's report and his description of people's democracy, even though the latter is a document accepted by world communists while the former is not. To quote Zhdanov:

"The new democratic governments in Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, Romania, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Albania, backed by the mass of the people, were able within a minimum period to carry through progressive democratic reforms such as bourgeois democracy is no longer capable

of effecting. Agrarian reform turned over the land to the peasants and led to the elimination of the landlord class. Nationalisation of largescale industry and the banks, and the confiscation of the property of traitors who had collaborated with the Germans radically undermined the position of monopoly capital in these countries and redeemed the masses from imperialist bondage. Together with this, the foundation was laid of government, national ownership, and a new type of state was created—the *people's republic*, where the power belongs to the people, where largescale industry, transport and the banks are owned by the state, and where a bloc of labouring classes of the population, headed by the working class, constitutes the leading force. As a result, the peoples of these countries have not only torn themselves from the clutches of imperialism, but are paving the way for entry on to the path of socialist development.”

The political thesis of the second congress describes the people's democratic state as follows:\* “The programme of the democratic movement can be . . . working class over the other sections of the toiling people.”

If the Andhra secretariat had stuck to those formulations there would have been no need to speculate on the character of people's democracy and land itself into opportunism. The position taken by the Andhra secretariat, and substantiated by loose quotations from Mao, amounts to equating people's democratic revolution to an antifeudal revolution, i.e. to a revolution of the ordinary bourgeois type. Under the plea of proving that this is not a socialist revolution the Andhra secretariat has come to the conclusion that it is an ordinary bourgeois revolution. All the references to India being a colony and semicolony, and the strategy suggested amount to this. In reality if only it would study the quotations from Zhdanov it would find answers to all the questions. The people's democratic revolution is not only antifeudal but anticapitalist also—it not

only abolishes feudalism but drives out the capitalists from key positions in the economic life and political rule and puts the people in a position to wage a successful final struggle against capitalism. This is how the bourgeois-democratic revolution gets intertwined with the socialist revolution and one passes into another.

*Chinese vs Russian Pattern of Revolution—Unmarxist Counterposing*

And finally the secretariat comes to the following conclusion as a climax to a line in which people occupy no consideration:

"Keeping all this in view, in areas where we are a good proportion in the masses like certain parts of Andhra, Kerala, Bengal, the time has come to think in terms of guerilla warfare (Chinese way) against military onslaughts of Nehru government which is bent upon mercilessly liquidating us."

Guerilla warfare against the Nehru government in co-operation with rich peasants—can you beat it? This is not a joke, for the rich peasant in some of these areas like Telangana is supposed to be vacillating ally through the entire period of people's democratic revolution. Can anything be more illusory than this? The secretariat knows what havoc association with rich peasants played in Andhra when the party had to face repression and yet this kind of stuff is solemnly written. And of course in the document there is no call for winning over the people, for people's democratic front, for winning over the majority of the masses in those areas where you are strong or weak. Where you are strong—guerilla warfare in cooperation with the rich peasant—such is its call. Guerilla warfare cannot be carried on by those who have not got the support of the overwhelming majority of the people of the territory—even this major fact is forgotten. This reference to guerilla warfare is only an attempt to appear heroic after having yielded the interests of the revolutionary

masses to the rich peasants and other sections of the bourgeoisie.

Finally you get the following:

"Our revolution in many respects differs from the classical Russian revolution; but to a great extent similar to that of Chinese revolution. The perspective is likely not that of general strikes and armed uprising leading to the liberation of the rural side; but the dogged resistance and prolonged civil war in the form of an agrarian revolution culminating in the capture of political power by democratic front."

The way in which the Russian and Chinese revolutions are described and contrasted is totally wrong.

Was there no civil war in Russia, no agrarian revolution, no protracted struggle? Did not the bolsheviks fight for thirty long years? To ask these questions is to expose the bankruptcy of the contrast.

Did not the strikes of Shanghai and Canton play a great revolutionary role in the formation of the Chinese red army and the revolutionising of the peasantry?

Anyone who rejects the revolutionary weapon of general strike—the specific weapon of the proletariat or belittles it, never mind under what excuse, is an anti-Leninist and anti-Marxist. Through it he really pours contempt over the role of the working class and takes a position that the fighting centre is only the peasantry and not the proletariat. The CPI considers the weapon to be one of the most important weapons in the revolutionary armoury—and will prepare for it as the preliminary to rising against the government.

Anyone can see even today what revolutionary role the strike of the railway workers will play in present conditions and when peasantry is moving and whosoever rejects the role of a general strike—is guilty of surrendering to the enemy a most revolutionary weapon of struggle. A general strike of all industries will be followed by armed uprising all over the country, if the proletariat had in the meantime won over the majority of the people for the

overthrow of the government, had created confidence among the people to follow the lead of the working class. The general strike in Russia followed by uprising was not a spontaneous phenomenon but the result of thirty years of proletarian struggle and the prestige of the bolsheviks among the people.

### *Why a Protracted Civil War in China?*

Why had the Chinese to go through the protracted civil war? Just because the leadership of the Chinese CP at times failed to fight for hegemony of the proletariat, for bringing the majority of the masses in alliance and under the leadership of the proletariat, because it followed tactical policies which led to a disaster. The sixth congress theses on colonial movement say the following:

"Living, concrete, historical dialectics, such as were demonstrated by now completed first period of the bourgeois-democratic revolution in China; will give to the communists, especially those working in the colonial countries, a valuable experience which it is necessary to study diligently in order to draw the correct conclusions, especially from the mistakes committed in the course of communist work in the colonies. The rise of the revolutionary wave in China was unusually prolonged (over two years), since it was connected with a protracted internal war. Inasmuch as the northern expedition was not conducted directly against the great imperialist powers, and inasmuch as the latter, owing to competition between them, were partially passive during the first period, while the bourgeois leadership of the national movement had already for some years held Canton in its hands—a definite, though limited territory—as well as a centralised power backed up by the army, etc., it is accordingly understandable that in this exceptional case a great part of the bourgeoisie in the beginning looked upon the national-emancipatory war as its own particular affair. The Kuomintang, in which it practically played a leading role, in the course of a short time came to be at the head of the national-revolutionary

movement, a circumstances which in the course of further events represented an extremely great danger for the revolution.

"On the other hand, among the peculiarities of the situation in China must be numbered the fact that the proletariat there was stronger in relation to its bourgeoisie than the proletariat in other countries. It is true that it was weakly organised, but during the upward growth of the revolutionary wave the growth of labour organisation proceeded at a very rapid rate. The Communist Party also rose in a short time from being a small group to a party with 60,000 members (and presently even more), and possessing a wide influence among the workers. Naturally in these conditions many bourgeois elements also entered the party. The party was lacking in revolutionary experience and, even more, in traditions of bolshevism. In the beginning the upper hand in its leadership was taken by wavering elements, which were still only to a very small degree liberated from petty-bourgeois, opportunist tendencies, which inadequately understood the independent tasks and role of the Communist Party, and which came out against any decisive development of the agrarian revolution.

"The entry of the communists for a certain period into the leading party of the national revolution, the Kuomintang, in itself corresponded to the requirements of the struggle and of the situation, and was also in the interests of the indispensable communist work among the fairly wide masses of toilers who followed this party. In addition, at the beginning the Communist Party of China received in the territory under the rule of the Kuomintang government the possibility of independent agitation among the masses of workers and peasants and among the soldiers of the national army and their organisations. At that time the party possessed greater possibilities than it actually made use of. At that time it did not sufficiently carefully explain to the masses its proletarian class-position in distinction from Sun Yat-senism and other petty-bourgeois tendencies. In the ranks of the Kuomintang the communists



did not carry out any independent policy, leaving out of account that in any such inevitable bloc the communists must conduct themselves in an unconditionally critical fashion towards the bourgeois elements and always come out as an independent force. The communists neglected to expose the vacillations of the national bourgeoisie and of bourgeois-democratic nationalism, just at the time when this exposure ought to have constituted one of the most important tasks of the Communist Party. The inevitable disruption of the Kuomintang drew nearer as the national army advanced, but the leadership of the Chinese Communist Party undertook nothing, or almost nothing, in order to prepare the party in case of a breach, and in order to guarantee its independent position and to unite the revolutionary workers and peasants in an independent fighting bloc which would oppose itself to the leadership of the Kuomintang.

"Thus the bourgeois counterrevolutionary coup of Chiang Kai-shek found the revolutionary proletariat completely unprepared, and threw its ranks into confusion. Further, the leadership of the Communist Party even at that time badly understood the process of the development of the revolution from one stage to another and did not carry through the correct changes in the line of the party made necessary by this coup. Inasmuch as the left wing of the petty-bourgeois leaders of the Kuomintang during the course of a certain time still went together with the Communist Party, there took place a territorial separation: there arose the separate governments of Nanking and Wuhan. But the Communist Party did not occupy a leading position even in Wuhan. Very quickly in the Wuhan territory there commenced a second period, characterised, among other things, on the one hand, by the presence of elements of an incipient, still indefinite dual power (the seizure by peasant unions of a number of ruling functions in the villages, and the extension of the functions of the trade unions, determined by the endeavour of the masses to reach a 'plebeian' independent solution of the question

of power), and, on the other hand, by the absence of sufficiently mature conditions for the organisation of soviets as organs of revolt against the Wuhan government, in so far as the latter still carried on a revolutionary struggle against the Nanking government, which represented the treachery of the bourgeoisie to the revolution.

"The Communist Party at that time directly hindered the independent actions of the revolutionary masses, it did not facilitate their task of gathering and organising forces, it did not assist in breaking down the influence of the leaders of the left-Kuomintang and their position in the country and in the army. Instead of utilising its participation in the government for these purposes, it, on the contrary, disguised the whole activity of this government (individual petty-bourgeois leading members of the party went so far that they even participated in the disarming of the workers' pickets in Wuhan and in sanctioning the punitive expedition to Changsha!).

'At the bottom of this opportunist policy lay the hope of avoiding a rupture with the petty-bourgeois leaders of the Wuhan government. But, as a matter of fact, this rupture could only be put off for a short space of time. When the mass risings acquired a threatening character the leaders of the Wuhan Kuomintang also began to reach out towards unity with their allies on the other side of the barricades. The revolutionary movement of the workers and peasants still continued to exert all its forces in order to achieve victory. The Communist Party of China now also corrected its line, elected a new leadership, and took its place at the head of the revolution. But the revolutionary wave was already falling. The heroic mass struggle under the slogan of soviets could only achieve a few temporary successes. Only in individual localities did the uprisings of the agrarian revolution begin sufficiently early, in the remainder the many millions of the peasant rearguard were delayed in their advance. Instead of the former gross errors of opportunist leadership there were now revealed, on the contrary, in various places extremely harmful 'puts-

chist' mistakes. The preparations for risings also did not take place without great mistakes on the part of the communists. The heavy defeats once more threw back the revolution, which in the south had already entered into the second stage of development, to the starting point of this stage."

### *Struggle for Proletarian Hegemony—the Key*

At the same time it is true that the battle is a hard one, people have to be won over, and petty-bourgeois revolutionaries who think that for revolutions people are not necessary, who forget that revolution is made by the majority of the people, have to be told that a swift and easy victory cannot be expected. But this does not mean that general strike and uprising disappear. It is quite conceivable that in these revolutionary battles, centres in the cities might be temporarily crushed while in agrarian areas, because of the vastness, centres of resistance might continue and the struggle may reach high pitch. But this does not mean general strike disappears, armed uprising disappears, only civil war in the countryside remains. On the other hand in such circumstances general strike will have an electrifying effect. There is another trend which considers that agrarian struggles, Telangana etc. are nothing but partial struggles, that these struggles are to be fought as partial struggles, and that until the working class in the cities is able to capture power, agrarian struggles cannot develop up to the point of liberation. This is an erroneous view. It fails to take account of the depth of the crisis of capitalism and the agrarian crisis growing as part of it. It fails to see that mass political strikes in the cities, at a time when agrarian struggles burst out in the rural areas, may strengthen the agricultural workers and poor peasants to raise their struggle to the highest pitch, up to the point of liberation of the area where such struggle develops.

Those who contrast the Chinese and Russian way have many wrong things in their mind. Firstly, their idea about

Russian revolution is wrong. They think that the Russian revolution was achieved on 7 November—a one-day show—a sort of coup and forget the dogged fight of three decades, the persistent effort to win over the majority of the people during the revolution and before. They also forget the civil war.

Secondly, when they contrast and uphold what they call the Chinese way, they seek to reject the hegemony of the proletariat in the democratic revolution—and feel that Chinese revolution shows that hegemony of the proletariat is not necessary. All the indirect references to general strike and armed uprising being out of date, guerilla warfare in agrarian areas, civil war and prolonged struggle really conceals the idea that the leadership of the proletariat is not necessary. This attempt is done in the name of anti-feudal revolution, agrarian revolution etc.—in short a theory of peasant leadership. Its anti-Marxist character stands exposed.

Proletarian hegemony is not formally repudiated, but it is put in such a way as to liquidate it. Some of those who advocate what they call the Chinese way, formally stand for the hegemony of the proletariat. But they suggest that the Chinese experience shows that it is exercised through the communist party—politically and ideologically, and organisationally—which in reality reduces itself to the assertion that a communist party, based itself on the ideological and political platform of the proletariat, can successfully lead the revolution without setting the working class itself, the mass of workers in motion—the hegemony to be secured through the leadership of the communist party and not through the direct participation and lead of the working class in struggle.

As has been pointed above this is a wrong conception. In connection with China also it does not hold good. Those who have witnessed the war going on in rural areas of China and are not aware who carried the flame of agrarian revolution in the Chinese interior are apt to forget the heroic and leading role of the Chinese proletariat. Firstly,

without the heroic and revolutionary struggle of the Chinese proletariat in Shanghai, Canton and other places, without their mass protests, the general strike, the great Canton uprising and commune, a steeled party of the Chinese working class could not have been. The Communist Party was the direct product of the heroic lead of the Chinese working class in the liberation struggle. Secondly, who carried the flame of revolution to agrarian China when they were compelled to retreat from the cities—the heroic proletarian fighters of Canton commune, the army trained in the class battles of proletariat in Shanghai—the army arising directly out of the Chinese workingclass struggle. Without these neither the great march nor the existence of the Communist Party of China was possible. It is thus clear that hegemony cannot mean hegemony of the party without the working class being in action, but directly the hegemony of the working class led by the party, the entire working class in action.

The PB rejects the entire outlook represented by the Andhra document as antiparty, anti-Leninist and being in utter repudiation of the political thesis of the second congress and of the accepted Marxist outlook on world situation, people's democracy, stage of revolution, as given in Zhdanov's statement.

#### V. REFORMISM IN THE NEW GARB OF PETTY-BOURGEOIS REVOLUTIONISM—CRITIQUE OF OTHER ANDHRA DOCUMENTS ON TACTICS AND TASKS

It is but natural that with this outlook the other documents drafted by the Andhra secretariat should suffer from grave omissions and reveal serious deviations. At the same time it is clear that called upon to lead the party there at the most crucial time the Andhra secretariat did give a firm lead, perhaps after initial vacillation on one of the most important questions facing the party—physical resist-

ance to brutal terror and repression. It is obvious that the provincial committee initially committed a gross reformist blunder when in the name of guerilla warfare it asked the party members to retreat from the villages when police attacked—thus leaving the people to their own fate. In its "Review of the Present Situation and Tasks", the secretariat says:

"... it (PC) gave wrong tactics of resisting police repression, i.e. retreat when police come in large number into the fields, return after the police is gone and make propaganda and teach a lesson to the goondas ... it worked havoc in the present conditions here. In many cases the cadre and even the local leadership ran away, leaving the masses to their fate. If instead we had asked the cadres and some local leaders (keeping some local leaders safe in order to maintain organisational continuity) to remain with the masses and resist repression, our position would have been much better. This is proved by the experience we now have. Activities like raping and looting are the least when there is any sort of resistance, though there is severe beating."

These wrong instructions were counteracted in the "Raids and Party's Tasks":

"When police raids occur none of the party members should leave the village and go away. One or two leading comrades of the village must remain in the neighbourhood of the village. Other leading members and party members must remain with the people. It does not matter if they get arrested ... if the police touch a woman we must fight back whatever the risk. Women must take up selfdefence measures."

This was a very correct lead, though somewhat belated. But in giving it under the circumstances created by heavy repression and all-round panic the secretariat proved worthy of the trust that the provincial ranks had placed in it.

For the rest however the Andhra documents reveal the same reformist impress seen in the document of "Stage of

Revolution". The secretariat has allowed itself to be overwhelmed by repression, by the crude petty-bourgeois revolutionism and has come to practical conclusions which are reminiscent of the "Pol-Org Letter" of February 1947 than of the present fighting line.

In the Andhra document there is no recognition of the central slogan of the party—people's democratic front—except once casually. The tactics of mass struggles, the objective, the experience, the winning over of different classes—are not at all related to this main slogan of people's democratic front—the instrument of winning over the majority of the people. This is not made the central point, the focal point of political and economic struggles, it is not regarded as the indispensable instrument which alone can secure our major objective—people's democratic state. How can a leadership be right if it forgot to make the front the central point of its activity? It must fail in isolating the bourgeois leadership, those who are repressing, because it will not have the correct slogans and understanding of the reality. This must be sharply nailed down as the major fault of the Andhra secretariat and its failure to understand the party line. Had it understood this it would have known how to fight the disease of petty-bourgeois revolutionism.

Secondly, in all the Andhra documents the economic analysis has no relation to practical slogans and hangs in the air. For that matter even their political analysis has no such relation. That is why even when they seem to accept the existence of economic crisis, in their practical conclusions they fail to see the wide sweep of the mass movement and fail to draw confidence about the development of the mass struggles, and warn the party members that we are lagging behind the tempo of mass struggles—not going ahead of it. That is why in the name of fighting vanguardism they come to advocate only partial struggles and other small-change of instructions.

The secretariat correctly sees the cause of collapse before repression in the rich-peasant bases of the party but

fails to draw political conclusions about deviations and mistakes—that they were the mistakes of a particular class etc.

### *Partial Collapse before Repression?*

What was the state of the party on the eve of the offensive according to the Andhra provincial committee? .

"(a) Our party grew into a mass party, from over a 1000 in 1942 to about 20,000 (not including Telangana) during this reformist period only. Most of them had no experience of even the satyagraha struggle, not to speak of the class battles conducted under the banner of our party. The standard of party membership was lowered, the clause regarding minimum regular work for the party was virtually suspended and those came to defend meetings or took part actively in assembly elections were recruited. A number of undesirable and antiparty elements have also entered and propagated in this stinking reformist atmosphere. Hence the party ranks in general were seized with panic at this largescale offensive. A few have resigned from the party and a good number have become inactive. There are not more than 500 resignations in a total membership of 10,000 even in Krishna district, where repression is most severe. In other districts, there are not many resignations. We cannot yet give figures of those that have become inactive. My estimation is that not more than one-half of the present membership will get inactive, including those that resigned. If we reorganise the party and revive the party life, we can activate a good number of those who have resigned out of panic, are not divulging party secrets or acting as informants, even under pressure from Congress and police. Some are coming again to the party, ashamed of their cowardice and asking for guidance. Only a few are acting as informants. As regards the class nature of those going out of the party, those coming from rich and middle peasants, are in general vacillating or going out of the party. Of them, only those that are ideologically steeled are



remaining. Generally the poor-peasant and the agricultural-labour mass is politically backward and not only not taken part in the anti-imperialist movement led by Congress, but was also hostile to it and secondly, due to our reformist outlook, we did not develop the agricultural-labour movement as an independent militant movement but as an appendage of the kisan movement, especially in the districts where the peasant movement is strong, for example, Krishna. In towns, cadres coming from the organised working class are firm; but those coming from middleclass and artisan sections are vacillating, for example, teachers and petty shopkeepers.

"But in this atmosphere of panic and demoralisation, there are sparks of hope too, a section of the party cadres withstood all this storm and bravely defended the banner of the party throughout the province; for example, in Chinnakallepalli, Valuvelu, Haripuram of Divi taluk, in Bezwada where two cell secretaries martyred for the cause of the party, Amritlur and Zoopudi of Guntur district, Rajahmundry and Chittivalasa etc.

"The collapse of some of our party strongholds like Katur, Mangalapuram, Davulur etc., even without resistance, gave courage to the police as well as local reactionaries and goondas to do all sorts of dirty things. It is true that the government concentrated on these villages with hundreds of police and goondas, but the absence of any kind of resistance is a pointer to the quality of our movement.

'(b) The local leadership, i.e. village and ward leadership, generally did not stand the test. It cannot be called leadership in the real sense of the term, except in some places where it evolved out of class struggles, but only 'call boys' of the taluk organisers, whose only job is to call the PMs for a cell meeting, when the organiser asks him to do. Moreover during this reformist period, party touts, preachers, rich-peasant and middle-peasant sons and such like elements came on top, occupied key positions in local committees and real fighters were kept back. Hence, when the offensive came on their head, instead of doing

their duty, they spread demoralisation in the ranks and began to question even the policy of the party itself. They acted as the saboteurs so to say.

"(c) The district committees, taluk committees, and most of the firka organisers stuck to their posts; but were stupefied at this largescale offensive, could not give a proper lead to the ranks as the organisation got out of their control with all the effects of the sins of past reformism crashing on their heads. Only a few cases among responsible party organisers like Ratakonda Narsimhareddi etc. got panicky and wanted the party policy to be reversed to the old rut of reformism."

The Andhra committee very correctly stresses the faulty class-composition of the party, the manning of key posts by elements from alien classes as one of the main causes of the collapse. Our party in Andhra, which includes hundreds of comrades imbued with heroism and revolutionary zeal, was paralysed because it was not based on the really revolutionary classes—and therefore the hesitation and even treachery common to such elements from other classes affected it—because those elements were in key positions. It is at the same time true that so great has been the revolutionary role of the party that a majority of these elements remained firm. Yet the minority, occupying key positions caused partial collapse. This was almost a disaster, a calamity—a warning that the logic of classes, of class struggle, is pitiless that those who violate the basic laws of Marxism will come to grief. That one of our most important units was very nearly betrayed by the heritage of past reformism, shows how the danger surrounds all units.

But the Andhra committee does not apply this understanding consistently to the political mistakes committed. In the mistakes of the provincial committee, in the mistakes of PMs, it only sees vanguardism—in the documents it mainly fights 'vanguardism' and under this mistaken notion very nearly liquidates the revolutionary perspective. It is obvious that if mistakes have been committed they must have their origin in the faulty class-composition of the

party and the reformist ideological outlook. Instead of tracing it to these causes the Andhra committee traces them to so-called 'vanguardism'. It is the habit of diehard reformists to explain every failure, every defeat of their reformist policy, by explaining it as due to 'sectarian', 'leftist' or 'vanguardist' mistakes. Such explanations enable it to cover reformism and sink still further in reformism, and move to extreme right. Instead of realising that reformist outlook had left the masses defenceless, or opened the flank to the enemy—such outlook pins the responsibility of its failure on alleged extremism, or overestimation of revolutionary tempo—making it appear as if they were running ahead of revolutionary developments, when in reality they were lagging far behind. The old central committee, steeped in reformism, was a habitual offender in this respect—every time explaining the failure of its reformist policies by saying that it was due to 'sectarianism'—that 'vanguardism' was provoking the government, etc. and the CC sank still further into reformism to avoid 'vanguardism' and came to grief.

### *Not "Vanguardism"—but Petty-Bourgeois Revolutionism*

The Andhra committee by using the wrong term 'vanguardism' to explain its mistakes is really surrendering to right-reformists who are advocating the same argument; for explanation of vanguardism leads to the conception that the masses are not moving with sufficient speed, that you are going beyond the tempo of the mass movement. This leads to toning down political slogans, gives a wrong understanding of the speed with which the masses are moving and leads to the emasculation of the mass struggle.

How does the Andhra PC estimate its mistakes?

"But the entire party in Andhra, from the PC to the cell, with a few exceptions, not heeding this warning, jumped straight into that of vanguardism. We did not read properly the pulse of the masses. We woke from 'Nehru bhajan'

after a period of 6 long months and also imagined the masses to have woken up from their deep slumbers, to which we are also guilty of having aided the national bourgeoisie in their game of lulling the masses to sleep.

"The PC gave such slogans as 'Nehru government is a fascist government'; 'Nehru the Indian Chiang', 'Nehru, the bodyguard of Tata and Birla' etc. in its appeal of 13 April in *Prajasakti*. The ranks eagerly responded and shouted 'Down with the Nehru fascist government'.

"The PC, without studying properly the effect of the economic crisis and the pulse of the different classes and also sections of a particular class—workers, middleclass employees, peasants (deltaic, Virginia and garden-crop areas as well as backward landlord and zamindari-ridden areas) and agricultural labour etc.—mechanically gave calls of strikes and mass actions for all classes and sections of the people, for example, circulars on present struggles in zamindari areas and paddy procurement, published in *Prajasakti*, and strike ballot for teachers given by the provincial teachers' federation. The ranks began to implement them everywhere assiduously.

"The PC gave a tech circular in which it asked comrades to keep lathi etc. for selfprotection and teach a lesson to enemies of the people who attack them, thinking in this wave of mass struggles they can easily be isolated. The ranks began to shout openly, 'We will teach a lesson to enemies' and began to demand arms from the higher committees.

"Vanguardism expressed itself more crudely as we go down to the ranks. The ranks took revolutionary possibilities for actual insurrectionary conditions, strategy for tactics and Telangana way for actual Telangana conditions."

"Even though the living conditions of the mass of the people are worsening day by day and their discontent has been mounting up, if their illusions about the Congress leadership are not smashed, it is impossible to move them into struggles against their oppressors. In that case, it is

the job of the revolutionaries to try to move the masses into struggles, through consistent political propaganda. If one attempts in haste to move the masses who are steeped in illusions about the exploiting classes and their political leadership, without sufficient political propaganda, one is sure to break one's neck and get demoralised. Now, let us come to concrete questions.

"In the case of the working class, the call for continuous strikes till the workingclass leaders were released was given in places like Guntakkal (railway workers), Guntur and Rajahmundry (municipal workers) etc. and had to be withdrawn in face of the government onslaught and the workingclass unpreparedness for such a continuous battle.

"In the case of agricultural labour, we are right in taking up their wage and other issues on a provincewide basis and preparing them for independent mass actions. By this we began the first major attempt to dig deep into our class in villages and base our movement on it.

"In the case of forcible procurement, we should have mainly concentrated on propaganda, resisted wherever the peasants are ready, instead of a simple general slogan 'Resist'. But the peasants did not move everywhere for resistance of forcible procurement. It first, in Krishna district, the peasants resisted indiscriminate procurement in Krishnapuram, Ponamalur, Poranki, etc. But when the government changed its tactics and left out peasants below 2 or 3 acres and launched severe repression, the peasants gave way. A report from Bukhapatnam of Anantpur district came, where forcible procurement was resisted.

"In the case of zamindari peasants, the circular should have asked comrades to concentrate on propaganda and move the peasants into struggles, wherever possible, on issues like refusal of taxes, taking hold of irrigation tanks and occupying the banjars, etc. instead of a general call to refuse paying taxes etc."

Anyone who reads the above extracts which the Andhra committee gives about the evidence of vanguardism will see that they disclose a different type of disease. They dis-

close the most elementary mistakes: ignoring the most obvious rules in conducting partial struggles—a general failure to understand the struggle of the masses and reliance on the revolutionary phrasemongering of the petty-bourgeois leaders. The classrooms are quite easy to see. The sons of our peasants, the rural intellectuals, have imported into the party their own alien conception of revolution. They could not be educated by the party; therefore the real struggle of the masses is alien to them. They do not base themselves on concrete class relations in deciding their actions. This is not 'vanguardism' but what Lenin calls 'petty-bourgeois revolutionism', by overcoming which alone the proletariat can march forward.

The Andhra secretariat used the word 'vanguardism' which was very current inside the party in the period of reformism. On closer examination it is revealed that there is no such word or tendency mentioned either in the *History of the CPSU(B)*, the *Programme of the CI* or Stalin's *Leninism*, and Lenin's volumes, recently persued. It is difficult to say whether Lenin used anywhere else this word to denote any particular tendency. It appears that the word is a special contribution of our reformist past, and was effectively used to liquidate all attempts to lead the masses, to liquidate the vanguard role of the party.

In the past the word has been used to connote all kinds of things—temporary disorganisation of the movement due to repression has been characterised as due to vanguardist mistakes, militant resistance by individuals also has been characterised like that.

In reality the expression seems to have arisen from cases where the revolutionary vanguard gets cut away from the masses at decisive moments, a tendency known as putschism, Lenin writes:

"To throw the vanguard alone into the decisive battle, before the whole class, before the broad masses have taken up a position either of direct support of the vanguard or at least of a benevolent neutrality towards it... would not only be folly but a crime."

This is a case when the vanguard is thrown into a decisive battle before the masses have taken a position—a decisive insurrectionary battle.

The *Programme of the CI* also gives warning about a premature insurrectionary outburst, but does not talk about 'vanguardism':

"When the revolutionary tide is rising, when the ruling classes are disorganised . . . the party of the proletariat is confronted with the task of leading the masses to a direct attack upon the bourgeois state . . . , this mass action includes general strike conjoint with armed insurrection against the state-power of the bourgeoisie . . . In passing over to new and more radical slogans the parties must be guided by the fundamental role of the political tactics of Leninism, which call for ability to lead the masses to revolutionary positions in such a manner that the masses may by their own experience, convince themselves of the correctness of the party line. Failure to observe the rule must inevitably lead to isolation from the masses, to putschism, to the degeneration of communism into 'leftist' dogmatism, and to petty-bourgeois 'revolutionary' adventurism."

Here again we find putschism etc. is characterised in connection with a premature attempt at insurrectionary outburst. The word vanguardism seems to have arisen in this context. In any case it cannot be applied because it does not describe correctly the vacillations of the petty bourgeoisie before struggle, or to phrases about revolution, importance of class realities.

What is petty-bourgeois revolutionism? This is what Lenin has to say about petty-bourgeois revolutionism in his "*Left-wing*" *Communism—An Infantile Disorder*:

"In the struggle against what enemies within the workingclass movement did bolshevism grow up and become stronger and steeled. Firstly and principally in the struggle against opportunism, which in 1914 definitely grew into social-chauvinism and definitely sided with the bourgeoisie against the proletariat. Naturally this was the prin-

cial enemy of bolshevism in the workingclass movement. This enemy remains the principal enemy internationally. It is this enemy that has claimed, and still claims, the attention of the bolsheviks most of all. This side of the bolsheviks is now fairly wellknown abroad too.

"Something different, however, must be said of the other enemy of bolshevism within the workingclass movement. It is not yet sufficiently known abroad that bolshevism grew up, took shape, and became steeled in long years of struggle against *petty-bourgeois revolutionism*, which smacks of, or borrows something from anarchism, and which falls short in everything essential of the conditions and requirements of a consistently proletarian class struggle. For Marxists, it is well-established theoretically and the experience of all European revolutions and revolutionary movement has fully confirmed it—that the small owner, the small master (a social type that is represented in many European countries on a very wide mass scale), who under capitalism always suffers oppression and, very often, an incredibly acute and rapid deterioration in his conditions of life, ending in ruin, easily goes to revolutionary extremes, but is incapable of perseverance, organisation, discipline and steadfastness. The petty bourgeois driven to frenzy by the horrors of capitalism is a social phenomenon which like anarchism is characteristic of all capitalist countries. The instability of such 'revolutionism', its barrenness, its liability to become swiftly transformed into submission, apathy, fantasy, and even a 'frenzied' infatuation with one or another bourgeois 'fad'—all this is a matter of common knowledge. But a theoretical abstract recognition of these truths does not at all free revolutionary parties from old mistakes, which always crop up at unexpected moments, in a somewhat new form, in hitherto unknown vestments or surroundings, in peculiar—more or less peculiar—circumstances.

"Anarchism was often a sort of punishment for the opportunist sins of the workingclass movement. The two monstrosities were mutually complementary...



"At its inception in 1903, bolshevism adopted the tradition of ruthless struggle against petty-bourgeois semi-anarchist (or dilettante anarchist) revolutionism, the tradition which has always existed in revolutionary social-democracy, and which struck particularly deep roots with us in 1900-3 when the foundations of mass party of the revolutionary proletariat were being laid in Russia. Bolshevism took over and continued the struggle against the party which more than any other party expressed the tendencies of petty-bourgeois revolutionism, namely the 'Socialist-Revolutionary' Party, and waged this struggle on three main points. First this party, rejecting Marxism, stubbornly refused (or rather was unable) to understand the need for a strictly objective estimate of the class forces and their interrelation before undertaking any political action. Secondly, this party considered itself to be particularly 'revolutionary', or 'left' on account of its recognition of individual terrorism only on the grounds of expediency..."

(Compare this last also with the advocacy of guerilla warfare without winning the masses etc.—individual and group actions divorced from mass struggle.)

### *Its Reformist Roots*

This petty-bourgeois revolutionism is at the root of the mistakes in Andhra. And it is not only in Andhra, but in other provinces also that the disease has spread since the session of the second party congress. Certain petty-bourgeois intellectuals have interpreted the party line to mean a licence for left phrases divorced from the actual conditions of the day-to-day struggle or the interplay of class forces. They have not cared to study either the political thesis or the international documents. They belong not only to Andhra but to other provinces. Some CC members who airily talk as if no change has taken place, who always plead for 'offensive tactics', who advocated armed resistance in other provinces and states but dare not do

so in their own province because reality is too near to be ignored; some intellectuals in Bengal who criticise and attack the provincial committee for lack of 'action'; the petty-bourgeois elements who talk in terms of provocative sabotage in industrial strikes but avoid mass battles with the police; those in Azamgarh who funk before the mass upsurge postponed it in the name of organising Telangana and ended in alliance with professionals—the tendencies represented by all these are petty-bourgeois revolutionism which must be mercilessly fought if the party is to discharge its revolutionary responsibilities. For what they reject is class outlook, estimation of class realities—Marxism.

In Russia, petty-bourgeois revolutionism was concentrated outside the Bolshevik Party—in the socialist-revolutionaries and anarchists. In other capitalist countries it was mainly concentrated in the anarchists. In India after the end of petty-bourgeois terrorism in Bengal and other places—an end brought about by developing mass movement, many of these honest elements swung over to the party. Remnants continued to eke out their independent existence but they themselves had to accept socialism and appear as Marxists. The influx of these petty-bourgeois revolutionaries was later added to by the influx of large number of petty-bourgeois elements from the Congress, from students—precisely at a period when the party was fast getting its proletarian outlook blurred. All this meant that some of the petty-bourgeois elements could not be completely assimilated and proletarianised and therefore the tendency to petty-bourgeois reaction, revolutionism—neglect of classes and their role should be strong. In India, therefore, unlike in Russia, at present at any rate petty-bourgeois revolutionism has to be fought inside the party. It was routed in Bengal when it was outside. Inside the party it assumes the Marxian garb and has to be unmasked. Those who display this tendency need not be immediately denounced, for the mistakes arose from the fact that the period of reformism has strengthened their non-

class outlook. But they have to be denounced if they become persistent defenders of their mistakes and tendencies represented by them have to be routed.

To turn to the Andhra secretariat and estimate its mistakes—it will now be realised that the secretariat which very correctly understood the class origin of the collapse of a section of the party, would have got the correct characterisation of its mistakes.

Obviously slogans such as 'Nehru government is a fascist government', 'Nehru the Indian Chiang', 'Nehru the bodyguard of Tata and Birla' etc. were wrong as 'rallying' slogans, as slogans of campaigning, as slogans of mobilising the people for struggle and fight. Not because they were wrong in their content, not because of lack of tempo in the mass struggle, not because such slogans 'over-estimated' the tempo of mass struggle, but because the advocates of these slogans forgot the elementary task of isolating and exposing the bourgeoisie in the concrete while simultaneously fighting it, they forgot that before you could raise the slogan of 'Nehru a Chiang'—as even a propaganda slogan, or a rallying slogan—much more so as a slogan or action—some concrete exposure of the bourgeoisie has to be done. To forget to do this is to forget the class-character of the government—a government manned by the national bourgeoisie who still have influence with the people and who are not completely isolated from the people, as imperialism was. That is, it is forgetting in a typical petty-bourgeois revolutionist fashion an estimate of class relations, rejection of class analysis, and refusal in the concrete to fight and take advantage of the crumbling influence of the bourgeoisie.

This is not 'vanguardism'; this is neglecting the basic task of organising the struggle in a concrete fight against the bourgeoisie, getting beaten by bourgeois influence and strength even when it is rapidly crumbling, just because you do not adopt a Marxist way of fighting it. This is petty-bourgeois revolutionism at its worst; it cannot utilise the revolutionary opportunities at all when the

bourgeoisie is in panic, gets itself beaten and then satisfies its conscience by saying it is 'vanguardism'—which immediately enables it to throw the blame on the masses who were supposed to be not as revolutionary as the leaders, whose tempo was not what it should be. Such explanations as 'vanguardism' only screen the disruptive tendency of petty-bourgeois revolutionism, fails to unmask it, prevents the party from correcting it and enables the right-reformists to drag down the party in the bog of reformism. It must be remembered that it is precisely the right-opportunists who always take advantage of every repression against the party, against the mass struggle. every temporary retreat brought about by repression, of every disruption and dislocation caused by wrong and erroneous nonclass application of the revolutionary line, to shout about 'vanguardism', about 'sectarianism', etc. to go back to the old line. The petty-bourgeois revolutionists play into their hands and the right-reformists seek to unnerve the party—when it is facing difficulties. The Andhra secretariat, by its erroneous characterisation of this tendency as 'vanguardism', is committing a right-reformist mistake.

The instances of other mistakes cited by the PC also bear the same impress. They show an inability to meet the varying attack of the bourgeois propaganda and agitation and slander; an inability to win the masses, convince them by countering the propaganda, to adjust the slogans, tactics of mass struggles to meet the changing attack of the bourgeoisie; an inability to master the science of leading the masses. This is not vanguardism; this is petty-bourgeois incapacity meeting a world which is far different from what it imagined, with its class relations, class struggles and the varying slogans of the various classes. Once more it cannot comprehend the classes, their actual struggle and wants to win it by mouthing brave slogans.

The document admits that on many occasions our comrades were not able to meet even the slanderous propaganda about communist-razakar alliance—when we were

shedding blood in Telangana—that they were not able to take the offensive and turn the tables against the class enemy. Read the following from “Lessons of Raids”:

“In spite of that, when Congress leaders who have done not the least bit of help in the struggle but on the contrary have carried on compromise negotiations with the nizam and disrupted the people’s struggle—when these people spread slanders that our party had joined hands with the nizam, party members collapsed and waited open-mouthed for instructions from the provincial committee.”

This throws a floodlight on how the party members were carrying on propaganda and how the PC was leading them. Once more an inability to fight the bourgeoisie—even its slanderous propaganda in the concrete—an inability which is inevitable if only general slogans are mouthed, the changing slogans of the enemy not anticipated, the exposure is not concrete.

The same inability is seen on the instance quoted about the procurement struggle. The document “Lessons of Raids” very correctly explains what happened but fails to draw proper conclusions and dubs it as vanguardism.

“Similarly the government, which had plundered the grain from the villages without any discrimination for poor peasants, had to exempt kisans holding 5 acres or less when due to the work of our party, both the Congress and the communist masses in Krishnapuram, Ponamalur and Poranki villages rose together to fight it back. But when the slanderous propaganda that repression resulted from atrocities committed by our party was being spread, we did not patiently explain to the kisans how it was because of the party fighting back that the government climbed down to exempt kisans holding 5 acres or less. While the enemies continued spreading slanderous lies, we did not do propaganda even in the neighbouring villages about these monstrous deeds.”

Here is one more typical instance of failure in mass leadership, failure to capitalise a big victory. To have

forced the government to retreat and give relief to peasants holding below 5 acres in the midst of unheard-of atrocities was a triumph of which the party could have been justly proud. To have brought about the unity of the Congress and our peasants was another big achievement. Yet the leadership fails to consolidate it and use it as a lever to march ahead. Why? Because perhaps with its mind concentrated on general slogans—'Down with...' etc.—the leadership fails to understand the revolutionary significance of such a victory in the partial struggle, totally underestimates the tempo which secured it and throws it away. It does not consolidate it by uniting the Congress and communist peasants still further, by using it as a lever to demand more relief to other sections if that was necessary and possible or to keep the entire united strength together for the next fight. The Congress leaders getting panicky at the fact that their own mass is joining the communists, finding that the atrocities committed by the government have made the peasants hostile, take advantage of our failure to consolidate the victory to start the propaganda especially among the peasants that the atrocities were due to communists and we do not realise the significance of this new move of the enemy. A victory won by the masses through intense suffering is undermined through our failure and the very perpetrator of atrocities has the cheek to come and attack the leaders of mass struggle. To describe this failure to lead the masses as vanguardism is to cover it up.

Similarly the mistakes regarding the teachers' strike or the railway strike are the elementary mistakes of people who have not mastered the theory and tactics of trade-union or mass struggles—and who have not studied the relations of immediate partial struggle in the revolutionary period to the political struggle—and who think that if the masses act in the economic struggle and the leaders mouth revolutionary phrases then revolution will be successful. Such a position cannot be described as 'vanguardist', 'insurrectionary' etc. It is really failure to organise the initial revolts,

in the name of general slogans. The erroneous characterisation of these mistakes lands the PC into the acceptance of a reformist perspective. How, we shall see soon.

### ***Correct Warning Regarding Exposure of the Bourgeois Leaders***

Before we turn to it, it must be admitted that the PC document "Present Situation" contains some good instances of how correctly to expose, and how correctly to argue with the masses, how to bring them to the point at which they can see for themselves the truth about the general slogans of the party. It is obvious that we want to popularise as quickly as possible the idea that the government must go; we want to mobilise the masses to liquidate it. Through partial struggles, victories, defeats, political struggles, etc. we are making and must make a conscious drive to make the masses come to this conclusion—that this government must go. The slogan will follow in the measure we have done some preparatory work in disillusioning the masses. And it must quickly become an all-India slogan. But to do this the masses must be brought to realise the necessity of it. The Andhra PC has some very correct things to say on this point in "Lessons of Raids":

"Instead of patiently explaining the issues to the masses, we harmed ourselves a great deal with demagogic phrases such as: 'Nehru is the Chiang Kai-shek of India', 'Nehru the bodyguard of Tatas and Birlas', 'Nehru government a fascist government', 'We will teach a lesson to our opponents' etc. These demagogic words gave a helping hand to the slanderous propaganda carried on by the Congress leaders to the effect that we are conspiring to overthrow the Nehru government and that we are planning to murder congressmen. They gave an opportunity to the enemies to sow confusion among the masses. Taking day-to-day provincial, national and international issues, we must patiently explain to the masses how this government is function-

ing in the interests of capitalists and zamindars, how it is serving the interests of imperialists, how it is submitting to the imperialists, how instead of keeping its election pledges to the masses it is launching the most severe repressive measures, and how Nehru too, with all his thunderous speeches about doing something for the masses, is following the same path. And explaining how this government cannot do anything in the interests of the people, we must show the need for a people's government. Beyond that there is no need at all to enter into the argument of whether armed revolution is necessary or not to overthrow this government."

The political thesis of the second congress has already given a warning about this:\* "We must remember that those in charge of the government . . . a new movement based on a new understanding of national unity."

The experience of Andhra confirms the warning given by the second congress. For where does come the necessity of patient explanation about a government whom you are out to overthrow? Why does not the slogan of overthrowing the government automatically become the slogan of rallying and uniting the masses? Because the task of fighting the bourgeois government is to be combined with the task of isolating the government—the latter task flows from the influence of the national leadership over the masses, which means that the masses have not yet come to the conclusion that the government must be overthrown. They are to be brought to that point through their own experience. Had the bourgeoisie and the bourgeois government possessed no such influence, had they stood exposed and discredited before the masses, then there was no question of not coming out with an immediate slogan of 'Down with the government', for it would have correctly expressed the experience of the masses and become a slogan of action. It is because of this influence, the necessity of isolation, that the slogan of armed



revolution, 'Down with the government', does not yet become a rallying or uniting slogan, though our aim is to bring the masses swiftly to that position. The entire aim of our exposure is in this direction and if we do not miss the intermediary steps we will bring the masses to that position in the shortest possible time. From experience comrades will see that the slogan will become a rallying slogan where we are leading struggles and where previous exposure is made, where exposure has been brought to this point. As the masses gather more experience, we will be able to raise the slogan, now here, now there—then all over India.

One of the difficulties today comes from the faulty mass-class basis of our party. The fact that its masses, sympathetic and direct supporters are largely petty bourgeois in towns—apart from the working class—and that in the countryside the party is not based on agricultural labour and poor peasants but on the middle peasant with his illusion about the Congress makes it more difficult to raise the slogan. The more we get firmly entrenched in poor peasants and agricultural workers—the more directly the slogan can be given.

### *Reformist Perspective of Retreat*

In spite of this correct warning and formulation made by it, the report of the provincial committee ends in toning down of struggles, blurring the perspective of developing mass struggles, in failing to give the party members the confidence that impelled by the crisis the masses are moving forward, and in general cautioning against struggles. The erroneous formulation about vanguardism leads to the mistake of underestimating the tempo of struggles breaking out—tempo which no repression is able to bring down.

The entire conception of tasks—apart from certain organisational tasks given for strengthening the party—smack of political demobilisation of the party; they seem

to be given on the basis as if the whole of India and perhaps the world has entered a period of reaction, as if nothing but some elementary partial struggles are possible.

It is true that conditions were very bad in Andhra and the committee was very right in taking note of the point, of the disorganisation created by repression, of the defeats and beatings which the masses got in some places. To have ignored these things would have been very wrong. It was also very right on the part of the committee to have laid down the rule 'no vacillating elements in key positions', calling for a purging of the panicky elements, raising the minimum qualification for party membership etc. For taking this quick action the committee must be congratulated. It is perhaps the only committee which has taken the question of purging the party seriously. Similarly the committee was right in bringing to the attention of the ranks the importance of daily struggles—on food, peasant demands, workers' demands, demands of agricultural labourers etc.

But all this was no reason why the committee should have lost the perspective of developing mass struggles, should have lost the confidence that these could be organised very soon; why it should have lost the political and economic perspective. How quickly the masses respond to the call of the party is seen from what happened at Divi on 15 August—Divi which was the scene of unprecedented terror, of raping of women. saw the people mobilised when the red flag fluttered and beckoned them. This was the unvanquished peasant of Andhra ready to surge forth when properly led by the party.

The committee, however, practically advocates a policy of the perspective of retreat—only partial struggles, no political slogans—no assertion that politicalisation and disillusionment are bound to take place rapidly, no confident call that the mass struggles are bound to develop because of the crisis and we should not be caught napping. Equally amazing is the absence of any political slogans—exposure of the national government on national

and international issues etc. The mere slogan 'Repression is being carried on not on communists alone, but on the entire people: Unite and resist or we shall be doomed' cannot work miracles. It must be accompanied by concrete exposure of the government policies.

There is no concrete guidance how to raise the partial struggles to political struggles, how to develop political consciousness out of them, how to link them in propaganda with the general slogans of the party; there is no indication how to connect the struggle against procurement with struggle for land—in short the link between partial struggles and basic class demands, between partial struggles and political propaganda and struggle.

The committee has unconsciously returned to the old opportunist slogan 'Conduct partial struggles as partial struggles'.

Thus the document becomes one of retreat. The Andhra committee should on the basis of this criticism draft a new document embodying all these points, keeping all that is correct in its analysis but throwing overboard what is wrong and draft a resolution restoring revolutionary perspective, and the link between the immediate partial struggles and political struggles, warning that big struggles are ahead and the party is lagging behind, laying down how to carry on political propaganda in these struggles and politicalise them, how quickly through these we will be able to expose the government and make the masses realise that this government must go.

### *Positive Achievements of Andhra Provincial Committee*

This critical estimate of Andhra PC's documents of course does not contain some of the positive achievements of our party there and the leadership. Called upon to lead the party there at the most critical period, the leadership of our party, the secretariat and the provincial committee manned their post heroically and did not get unnerved at the brutal repression and atrocities. They kept the party

together, they regathered and regrouped the forces for a fight, they called on party members to wage a war against cowardice and fight like communists—in keeping with the great traditions of our party—the traditions of Telangana, of the Kayyur comrades, of the Bombay working class which defied tanks on the RIN revolt day. Our comrades had a very difficult task to perform. The party was brutally attacked, and all the forces were concentrated against it immediately after the party congress. In fact the attack had started earlier and most of the Andhra leaders had gone underground even before the party congress. Before they could make a turn, before the party membership could make a turn and test the new line in practice, the attack had started. It is nothing to be wondered at if mistakes were committed. The Andhra committee however has rendered a great service to the party by putting all the issues on a fundamental plane thus enabling clarified understanding and helping the process of ideological unification.

Secondly, the Andhra committee has again rendered great service by saving party cadre and underground party organisation and keeping it functioning in spite of terror. This in itself is a big achievement and many a provincial committee would have saved itself from enormous losses in cadre—had it the experience of the Andhra committee. The leadership of Andhra secretariat and committee is old, trusted and steeled leadership, and its latest review, though it contains many erroneous formulations, constitutes an honest attempt to struggle to catch reality and come to grips with it.

Our party ranks in Andhra have brought fresh glory to the red flag—the banner of the party. Having withstood the sadistic terror, braved torture, seen their women and children humiliated and tortured—but they did not flinch in their loyalty to the great cause of communism. Their sacrifice and courage have saved the party and defeated the enemy's offensive which was launched to crack the base of the party. The resistance offered by our mem-

bers and our masses in many places will go down in the history of our fight as a glorious struggle against overwhelming odds. The memory of our six cell secretaries who died fighting, of all those who fell resisting—will be permanently cherished by our party. There were comrades—a number of them—who were politically wrong when they loosely talked of guerilla warfare detached from mass struggle. The PB has criticised such an outlook. At the same time it must be stated that though these comrades were politically wrong, none could beat them in their devotion to the party, in their courage for the cause of communism, when the attack came they stood like a rock and gave unexampled instances of heroism and were largely instrumental in saving the party. All glory to them!

How little the enemy has succeeded in crushing is seen from the example of Divi. The Andhra masses under our leadership have had the first baptism of revolutionary struggle. If they appeared to reel a bit, it can only be a temporary phenomenon; they are bound to rise in greater strength in the immediate future and the task of the party is to be ready to lead the coming mighty battles which no amount of repression can prevent. Let the critical estimate made by the PB arm and steel our leadership and ranks alike to shoulder the great revolutionary responsibilities that await them.

## *Part Two*

### VI. RIGHT-REFORMIST DEVIATION IN WEST BENGAL COMMITTEE

In Bengal the same questions have been raised in a somewhat different form—i.e. in the first place there is a tendency to water down the clear lead given by the second congress in the interests of reformism and secondly a petty-bourgeois revolutionist tendency which shirks the revolu-

tionary tasks of building mass struggles and is wrongly dubbed and characterised as 'left-adventurism' or 'vanguardism'.

No detailed political report is available as regards Bengal—document reviewing the experience of mass struggles of the last six months, the changed positions of parties, groups and organisations, the movement of the classes—as the Andhra document has attempted to do. The report of CC member Mullick (Mohd Ismail) reveals that not only the PC has made no review of recent past to have a correct understanding of the present, but it has steadfastly neglected the task of reviewing of the most militant and inspiring struggles of the present period, and has failed to study the lessons of recent mass struggles.

All that is available from Bengal are some documents which addressed themselves to some doubts and hesitations raised by party comrades, and resolutions on TU and kisan fronts, together with a report of the activity of the West Bengal PC. For want of a detailed review it is of course not possible to lay bare the source of mistakes wherever they exist. Moreover here the reformist hesitations do not take the form of challenging the fundamental basis of the party line, but unconsciously straying into it under stress of repression, break of the link with the mass and by substituting the subjective moods of the leadership for the objective struggles of the masses.

Because of this, because of a failure to discuss the differences fundamentally, there is ideological confusion. The report on activities of West Bengal party says:

"The main weaknesses of this period which still continue and persist are there—ideological confusion, absence of unity on political and organisational matters (this is marked at all levels), vast number of members remaining inactive, lack of understanding of the new tasks in the new period and clinging to old habits and methods of work. This we sought to liquidate by means of kisan and TU resolutions and resolution on democratic front. Still political unity could not be forged in the PC and we dif-

ferred on important organisational matters, on how to function the PC."

What were these controversies?

"The main controversies that arose were: (1) Is it a period of general offensive of reaction? And therefore a period of retreat? (2) Is the time mature for armed action against the government?"

Though the position taken by the PC as given in its report on activity seems to be generally correct, the fact that these questions were raised and debated show how deep down the reformism has permeated the minds of party leaders. The party ranks would not believe, they would lose their faith in such leaders, if they knew that within a couple of months after the party congress some leaders of the provincial secretariat seriously debated whether it was a period of retreat. This was the same reactionary stand which Joshi advocated in his "Pol-Org Letter" when he flatly stated that reaction was on the offensive, and advocated a line of retreat all along. The West Bengal documents do not give the names of comrades who took such a stand. Otherwise it would have shown the continuity of reformist line, revealed that these comrades have only formally accepted the party congress resolution—but are ever ready to revise a revolutionary understanding of the situation at the first opportunity, at first difficulty in which the party finds itself.

### *Reformist Cry About 'Period of Retreat'*

Unaccustomed to Marxist way of thinking, neither these comrades nor those who differed from them realised that by raising the question whether it was a period of retreat or not, when the working class and the masses were just entering on a serious fight, when serious fight had not yet begun, they were not only guilty of base cowardice—not only demonstrated their utter bankruptcy in understanding what a revolutionary struggle is, but demanding a complete change in the understanding of the period, i.e.

they were demanding a diametrically opposite economic and political analysis of the situation. A period of retreat would be signalised when the proletariat and its followers have really temporarily exhausted their fighting capacity, when either through terror or economic measures a temporary way has been found out by the capitalist class, when against its increasing offensive the working class can no longer take the challenge in any militant form, especially politically. A period of retreat therefore forces certain specific forms of struggle as the dominant forms—parliamentary activity, legal activity that is permissible, only partial struggles without much hope of their politicalisation, in trade-union matters often a great reliance on factory grievances and not the general basic demands, partial struggles are confined to the grievances and demands of the factory or concern and no prospect of their developing into struggle for basic demands. Much less is there any possibility of the struggles leading to revolutionary possibilities in the near future, political battles, seizure of power, general strike, etc. This is how Lenin defined in "*Left-wing*" *Communism* the years of reaction—the period of retreat:

"The years of reaction (1907-10): Tsardom is victorious. All the revolutionary and opposition parties have been defeated. Depression, demoralisation, split, discord, renegacy, pornography instead of politics. There is an increased drift towards philosophical idealism; as a cloak for counterrevolutionary sentiments... Defeated armies learn well... The revolutionary parties must complete their education. They have learnt to attack. Now they have to realise that their knowledge must be supplemented by the knowledge how to retreat properly... Of all the defeated opposition and revolutionary parties, the bolsheviks effected the most orderly retreat... The bolsheviks achieved this solely because they ruthlessly exposed and expelled the revolutionary phrasemongers, who refused to understand that one had to retreat, and that one had to know how to retreat, and that one had absolutely to learn how



to work legally in the most reactionary parliaments, in the most reactionary trade unions, cooperative societies, insurance societies, and similar organisations."

Such are the characteristics of the period of retreat and the tactics that follow from it. Those who seriously raised the question of a period of retreat were in effect suggesting that the people have been defeated by reaction; therefore retreat to a policy of feeble opposition etc. Whether they were conscious or not, this and nothing else would have been the logic of their estimation. It would have had the same result, in fact a worse result, than that following the erroneous characterisation of deviation in Andhra as vanguardist deviation. In Bengal this repudiation of party line and struggle for reformism took the form of surreptitious revisionism in the guise of a study of the situation. It is a pity that the two PB members (Bhowani Sen and Somnath Lahiri) failed to nail down this tendency, unmask it before the ranks by exposing its logical implications. The PB members who drafted the West-Bengal document replying to this discussion no doubt took a correct line and gave a correct answer and the provincial committee accepted it. But this document was only based on positive assertions of the policy; it did not negate specifically the doubts raised, unmask them and expose their social roots. This way reformism cannot be fought. By avoiding innerparty controversy, avoiding criticism of the erroneous outlook, the party can never be forearmed against deviations. It was necessary to take up these doubts, show their social roots, their logical conclusions and unmask them. Inside the party reformism will never come as open reformism but as an estimate of provincial situation, individual struggles, etc. The period when reformists inside the party would fight openly for a different understanding of the world situation or national situation is over.

#### *Not Sharply Unmasked*

And just because these formulations are not nailed down as the repudiation of the party line, the documents passed

by the committee partly show the doubts as concessions to reformism.

The document "Some Observations" definitely states that the attack against the party is a sign of weakness of the ruling class etc.—yet even after that document such concessions are made.

How real was the concession to reformism, how liquidationist the whole attitude was, could be seen from the fact that the document on trade unions practically liquidates the trade-union upsurge, and gives no broad political guidance, nor a tactic of trade-union struggle based on the rising militancy of the masses, but is based on general cautioning against mistakes etc. It is a typical document which shows no faith in mass struggle, in its development, and bases itself surreptitiously on the slogan of retreat. It does not do it openly; in a vague general way it talks of an upsurge, general strike also, but bases its immediate tactic on lack of any such development.

Before the documents and their contents are taken into consideration, certain confusion must be cleared. What had happened in Bengal that comrades should raise the question of 'retreat'? Nothing except the fact that the party was declared illegal. What had happened really was that the party leaders were unlinked with the mass organisations and mass struggles; that they could not physically meet the workers in the field and they could not bring themselves to give guidance from the underground apparatus. There was nothing else. And this was made into a theory of retreat. To think that because the party was attacked it was a period of retreat, was nothing but retreat before repression. It was capitulation.

No doubt there was some disorganisation of *our work*. But every disorganisation, whether through arrest of leading comrades, attack on the party, illegalisation of the mass organisations, cannot be called a period of retreat, or end of upsurge. This is actually what the ruling class fondly hopes to achieve. This is just what it cannot because the

causes of social unrest are deep and it cannot be easily crushed.

There are some comrades it seems who began to quote statistics about strikes. Such comrades must be deemed neither to know Marxism nor how to read statistics. Apart from the fact whether there were less strikes or not, anyone familiar with the trade-union or political movement will realise that even in a revolutionary period the movement does not necessarily proceed in a regularly rising crescendo but in spurts so to say—all the accumulated discontent now breaking forth with utmost intensity, then again taking some time to burst forth with greater force. If the intervening period between two bursts is called 'reaction', 'no upsurge', you only get completely floundered by the violence and intensity of the upsurge and fail to prepare for and lead it. This is in fact what happened in Bengal.

No one appears to have given any socioeconomic reasons why the movement should go down. Has the cost of living been stabilised? Have the peasants won concessions? Have the masses been defeated? Has the terror been so widespread that demoralisation is ahead?

None of these factors were obtaining. It might be that in a few months there were perhaps less strikes? What of that? Since the crisis was there, it meant not that upsurge had gone down, not that it would be simply renewed—but that it was preparing to burst forth with greater violence—it was continuing—and the party should be prepared for it.

Besides it is impermissible to make such basic formulations, as if Bengal was isolated from India and the rest of the world; if formulations about retreat etc. are made by provinces, villages, towns, separately—it would be a mockery of Marxism. One can talk of temporary disorganisation of the apparatus etc. in a province or territory but it is impermissible to talk of a period whose characteristics flow from the general consequences of the all-India crisis. This outlook rejects a centralised political

understanding for the whole of India; it smacks of narrow parochial outlook of petty-bourgeois intellectuals who would not look to other provinces, to the experiences of their own party in other provinces.

### *Failure to Lead Mass Struggles*

That the real thing was that the party was not able to lead the mass struggles, link itself with the masses and keep the ranks active is proved from the fact that 50 per cent of the membership is still inactive, and further, from the following quotation from "Report of Activities":

"The strike by the central government employees started on 2 April (i.e. one week after illegalisation). But neither the PC nor the Calcutta DC could help them in any way. For the first time the strikers saw the Congress government in all its nakedness. The strikers did not get any clear and bold lead from any quarter; our boys who were leading were all inexperienced and suffered from legalist and reformist illusions. The party remained inactive and dumbfounded. The strike collapsed after a week. There were mass arrests—500 arrested."

One can now understand the utter reformism of comrades who in face of this failure to lead the masses attempted to discuss whether there was upsurge or not.

To take another instance and of the grossest type—the instance given by Mullick in a special report to the PB:

"In the biri workers' strike for increase of wages in Calcutta and Bihar about 60,000 were involved. They fought for about a month; they hoisted the red flag in the streets of Calcutta in April when repression was in full swing (and then some PC leaders were trying to prove that it was a period of retreat), they took out a big demonstration in the streets of Calcutta shouting slogans to legalise the party, inqilab zindabad, etc. Their leaders were arrested; they went to the police station and demanded their release. They compelled the government to release their leaders. They fought like hell with the INTUC and the socialists and beat them back. They fought the com-

pany's dalals. Ultimately they won the strike. In this strike the Calcutta party never gave any help. The DC secretary and the DC members have never even seen the leaders of the strike, in spite of their repeated demands."

Mullick's revealing report gives a number of instances which conclusively prove that the PC secretariat and the Calcutta DC both had shut themselves off from the workingclass movement, and had not even shown the elementary duty of reviewing the big strikes and their experiences. No strike was reviewed, no lesson drawn, no new lessons to teach the masses, the TU cadres, how to fight and organise; no lessons to the party members to teach how to link the mass movement with the underground centre. A complete testimony that the PC secretariat failed to give leadership to the mass struggle.

It will be thus seen that the cry of retreat, objectively amounted to a convenient excuse to screen the failure to give a lead to mass struggles, failure to link the underground centre with the masses—an escapist form of leading mass struggles.

That there was definite hesitation to lead mass struggles not only in the PC but also in the DCs is confirmed from the following report of Sukhen dated 6 November 1948:

"(1) In Hooghly, the Bora-Kamalapur struggle and the stalemate conditions are known to us. They fought against the oppression of local zamindars and congressmen and are still sustaining their morale. There is still practically no organised lead—the struggle does not base on the specific basic demands of the kisans and could not be spread in surrounding areas. The party leadership is systematically failing to organise the base. The conflict in leadership is still there. From PC we made certain stop-gap arrangements to help the struggling kisans by sending relief, deputations, reporter visiting squads, etc. etc. The district kisan sabha fraction has met a number of times with no conclusive result...

"(2) In Burdwan, Agradwip kisans are conducting a struggle against the local oppressive zamindar against

ejectment etc. Some of the local cadres had legalistic illusions and had been obstructing kisans' demonstration, putting up no resistance to government forces in spite of the militants' preparedness. After the suspension of one leading comrade, kisans brought out demonstrations etc. and the tempo began to rise...

"In Nandigram, the kisans of No 6 & 7 forcibly tilled the land—in spite of ejectment orders, except two villages (one being our base and the leading cadre of the village getting funky).

"The kisans of Dongajora fought against armed forces on the issue of blackmarketing of paddy, the kisans of Budhakali are continuously facing the police camps. In all these places the kisans' morale is not dwindling, it is on the upgrade in spite of the lack of bold leadership on the part of our top organisation.

"In the bases where the majority class-composition is bhagchasis (sharecroppers) and where we conducted tebhaga struggles or at least popularised the demand of tebhaga, the kisans this year want to fight on tebhaga but this time they think not tebhaga but the whole crop has to be brought to their own house as in either case they apprehend the greatest blow from the government and jotedars. Their doubts are whether we would be able to lead them successfully or not. But they say they have no other way but to fight—this is based on their experience of the constitution-hoax and on the confidence of their own fighting capacity revealed through last tebhaga.

"The rich kisans, some middle kisans and rural petty-bourgeois comrades who are the local or district leaders showed in many places vacillation even to popularise the basic slogans formulated by the provincial committee. This is being revealed as the local cadres go on meeting collectively and take review of the jobs done and not done during the past 4 months."

This has been the real problem all along—whether in relation to workingclass or kisan struggles and the provincial secretariat has been shirking it, failing to see it and

some comrades were attempting to pass on the responsibility for this state of affairs to the masses. The underestimation of the mass tempo and the failure to keep pace with it, finding out excuses not to lead it, are characteristics of a reformist outlook and they are seen here.

It is because of this that the PC and DCs do not care to review some of the biggest struggles—do not draw lessons. There is a document on democratic front—as if they did not exist, as if they were not the basic reality. This is born out of two things: Firstly, because the strength of the mass upsurge—that it will change the political landscape—is not real to them. In fact there is a petty-bourgeois contempt for the initial struggle of the masses—its revolutionary meaning is not formally seen. Secondly, because of the underestimation of the upsurge, because of an outlook that it will develop one day—whereas it is already developing—the immediate struggles are being missed. The reformist concession to the view that upsurge is not there has caused loss of perspective and brought about failure to lead the mass struggles.

### *Critique of TU Resolution*

In view of this the document on TU movement drafted by one of the PB members (Somnath Lahiri) constitutes a really remarkable document, opening the floodgates to opportunism and reformism. Anyone who would claim that the Bengal secretariat had not really fallen into the reformism again should read the document. It is quite clear from it, that all the documents produced by Robi (Bhowani Sen) and which in the main upheld the party line seemed to have been only formally accepted by the secretariat.

The trade-union resolution adopted by the secretariat as late as 15 August 1948 when even the first subjectiveness arising from illegalisation should have disappeared, quite calmly argues as if even the TU struggle of the working class is yet to start. In typical reformist fashion

it is not only blind to what is happening in the rest of the country, but also to what is going on in Calcutta. Consider the following statement:

"Though the workers are getting rapidly disillusioned about the policy of the national reformists and though their urge for resisting the worsening conditions is growing every day, we do not yet see a mass workingclass upsurge because the majority of the working class had not yet realised the need for a joint offensive against the terror and the worsening conditions or has not yet become sure of their ability to fight it back."

This is said after the most hesitating section of the employees—the government employees—had gone on strike and demonstrated in face of victimisation; in a period in which even the police—the last bulwark of the government—has started wavering. Every Marxist at least ought to know that for government employees—middle-class employees—to come on strike things must have been in a state of continuous ferment—workingclass strikes must have loosened the fear and instilled so much courage, apart from economic desperation, that even the most hesitant section enters the battle arena.

If the comrade had said that as yet the elementary TU upsurge has not developed into an insurrectionary upsurge—a political upsurge—he would have been right. But he talks about daily struggles and says there is no mass workingclass upsurge.

He expresses the same idea earlier when the document states:

"Working class is gradually entering into a stage of conflict with the employers and government. Some previous struggles clearly demonstrate this."

This is how the upsurge is surreptitiously underestimated. The heroic working class which has seen unprecedented battles in recent months is yet only gradually entering conflict—trade-union conflict, if you please. If the comrade concerned says that what he means is that the majority of the working class has not started a simultaneous



fight for its demands, synchronising in time, then such a fight, it must be plainly understood, comes out either as the final culmination of the upsurge, on the eve of revolution, or on the eve of a partial breakdown of the government etc. To mistake the final culmination for the developing struggle is not serious Marxism. So that the gist of the formulation is that there is hardly any trade-union upsurge.

The comrade then talks about a general strike and then makes the following amazing formulation:

"This upsurge *might* come (he is not sure about it, does not see it exists today) but if we are caught napping, the upsurge will end in total demoralisation... On us depends whether the upsurge will take place at all or crushed or lulled by the government..."

Here a number of mistakes are committed. Firstly, it is stated that the upsurge might come—he thus denies its existence today; then it is made dependent on us—the party—this is also wrong—the organised leadership of this upsurge—leading it to success—political conclusions depend on the leadership of the party. But the causes of the upsurge arise decisively out of socioeconomic conditions leading to spontaneous elementary struggles of the masses. The upsurge in this form is taking place even when we are not there to lead it. All this confusion arises from the fact that upsurge is not distinguished from its culmination, general strike etc.—and is equated to it; the word upsurge thus serves double purpose—first to prove that the final culmination of the upsurge does not exist—and from that to deduce that upsurge in the sense of a rising spontaneous movement of the masses also does not exist. It is thus that the document preaches a reformist outlook and tactics.

Based on revisionist confusion the document is a hotch-potch of all instructions, good and bad, none of which however is explained or given a place in proportion to its political importance. You cannot produce a document for a revolutionary party by incorporating all dos and don'ts—

irrespective of their importance in the situation. It will not save the cadre from committing mistakes. It only gives the leader the excuse to escape further criticism by saying he had put all suggestions, contradictory as well as complementary in his document.

Not that all the suggestions and instructions it gives are wrong. But most of them will lead the comrades astray just because the urgency of leading the mass struggles is not placed, the tempo is totally underestimated, the main deviation—lag behind the mass struggles—is not only not laid down but a contradictory analysis—no upsurge—is made. In this background instructions which are otherwise useful have every chance of leading to opportunist practice. For instance, how can a warning against unnecessarily protracting strikes help the comrades when the disease is of not properly leading strikes, lagging behind spontaneous indignation of the masses?

### *Revolutionary Perspective Denied*

The basic defect of the document, firstly, is that it gives up the perspective of revolutionary developments and denies it. Secondly, it fails to understand the main shortcoming of the present period—the failure of party to keep pace with the masses—even according to the old standard. Thirdly, it underestimates the upsurge. Fourthly, it does not make the least attempt to review seriously a single workingclass struggle, its experience under new conditions and give any instructions. Fifthly, there is no integrated outlook—whatever suggestion has come into the head of the writer has been put in the same order on paper. And sixthly, the tips given are of such a general character. Seventhly, no mention is made of the basic slogan of strike committee, rank-and-file leadership in strikes—how to have a broadbased strike committee to train workingclass leadership, no warning against trade-union bossdom—all these are totally absent.

Coupled with this are thoroughgoing opportunist formu-

lations like 'hit-and-run' affair which is opportunist theory of waiting on events, not preparing for struggle, justifying the existing practice of Bengal party leadership:

"Under conditions of terror it has to be a hit-and-run affair. Whenever we find the pulse of the workers going up, an offensive coming which is actually resented by the masses or some such thing, immediately rouse them up and call them out as soon as you find that the workers will respond to the call."

These instructions sum up the opportunist outlook which is always afraid that the workers might not go on strike even when an offensive is there, leave aside themselves taking an offensive and caution against 'over-striking' by leadership when in actual fact, the workers were executing marvels of courage and heroic struggles. The hit-and-run affair is a clever way of sabotaging mass struggles by waiting for them; way of being dragged at the end of mass struggles, not of leading them. It comes because the reformist outlook does not believe that the masses are really fighting.

In reality a different warning was required. The warning especially to the trade-union leaders here: do not mistake your own demoralisation before repression for the mood of the masses—in all provinces the workers have repeatedly shown an amazing capacity to withstand terror and fight back—a capacity which we the communists had not seen in the workers all these years. Formerly one-tenth of this terror would have meant an end to strike, trade unions, for a pretty long period. Now the terror is fought back for months. This has been the experience of Amalner, Coimbatore, SIR, Vizagapatam, where the recent assembly elections fought in conditions of terror gave big vote to the party. This shows how deep opportunism has gone down since it makes comrades forget their recent experience.

With such basic tactics advocated, when the deviation is that of neglecting mass struggles—what use are instructions like: fight with militant means when necessary, etc? These

are mere phrases which only cover the policy of waiting on events, no faith in the masses. It is the latter that dominates the action of the party members for it corresponds with the existing deviation in the party and freezes it.

If the authors of the document had paid serious attention to the points culled by them, they themselves would have come to the conclusion that the party is lagging behind mass struggles, failing to organise them.

Here are the instances given in the document:

"(1) In the tramways after the company's offensive at Nonapukur we failed to realise the need for rousing the workers to a protest action the very next day. Even after the decision was taken most of the leadership thought it was wrong to have a strike and that its inevitable failure will finally demoralise the workers and ruin the union. The result proved the contrary.

"(2) In Lipton, even when nearly one-third of the total number of workers were retrenched we failed to call upon the workers to resist.

"(3) In jute, we refused to utilise the INTUC federation's demagoguery about a one-day strike against dismissals on the plea that they were not serious about it and that they themselves were not propagating their slogan among the workers. We did not realise that it was necessary for us to convey their decision to the workers and, with suitable modifications on their demand, agitate for a united-front token strike on a near date. That would have, on the one hand, exposed to the workers the hollowness of the INTUC's pretensions. This happened because our comrades, who were living in the make-believe of a huge jute strike taking place by itself in the near future, did not realise that only agitation and action on occasions like the INTUC resolution could bring about a huge strike in the future.

"(4) On the Socialist Party's call for a one-day strike in Howrah against engineering award we did not see it as a tremendous opportunity to seal the fighting unity of our and socialist-controlled workers. We saw only the socialist leaders and speculated they could not be serious about the

strike call but, being just as much dead to workingclass needs and feelings as the socialist leaders themselves, did not see the tremendous ferment in the class which had compelled the socialists to issue the call. We remained neutral to the strike call, privately even poohpoohed the idea. A strike call which, if joined by us, might have changed the face of Howrah by rousing the majority of Howrah's working class into a mighty one-day battle and could have laid the foundation of the future general upsurge in Howrah, was betrayed by us, the working class was set one against another, with the inevitable result that we were even powerless to prevent the Burn employees, over whom we used to have good influence, to call in police to help them break the strike."

The document makes a very correct comment on these instances. It refers to a naive idea that verbal "exposure coupled with worsening conditions will very soon bring about a mass workingclass upsurge spontaneously and all that we have to do is to wait for the storm to burst. This false 'perspective' has been a cover for panic and reformism, it has led to holding the worker back from action, retreating before the owners' and government's offensive, refusing to acknowledge the workers' growing desire to unite to resist." And yet the document ends by throwing out all perspective, and hits upon the tactics that it condemns and all this because the authors have no faith that mass struggle is really on, that strikes even against the offensive will really break out.

Here we see hidden reformism and therefore all the more dangerous. We see it even when there is hardly any terror compared with Andhra, Tamilnadu or Kerala.

### *Revolutionary Phrasemongering*

The other side of this same process is petty-bourgeois revolutionism—those who are brave in words and who advance these words as against the realities of class struggle, and more, it is the same class and the same deviation

as in Andhra. And it took the same identical form. In the ranks it took the form of slogans like 'Nehru a goonda, Kiron Shankar is a goonda'—a crude manifestation of petty-bourgeois loquacity. On the higher level—ideologically the question was posed: why no call for armed revolution?—why no slogan for armed revolution? etc. As we see, it is the same question.

Robi in his document—"Provincial Circular 5—Some Observations"—has answered this question correctly, though he should have taken it more seriously and dealt at length. He correctly points out that the slogan forgets the task of isolating the bourgeoisie, fighting its influence. This is very correct. The question has been dealt with in earlier pages and therefore it need not be dealt here. But the class origin of the question—petty bourgeois—must be noted.

Here you find petty-bourgeois revolutionism in its nakedness. These revolutionary phrasemongers did not see that the actual struggles of the masses were being neglected because of reformist deviation. That was no concern of theirs. All that they were concerned with was advancing more and more radical slogans—the more radical the better. So armed revolution—on the basis of neglect of the developing struggles—arms, means to fight, etc.—such is their sense of revolution. Reject revolutionary struggle in the concrete to talk big—and when beaten back deny that the masses are fighting—such is their practice.

Much light would be thrown on this dangerous tendency inside the party if the provincial committee were to make a selfcritical review of the recent period. When all the slogans, doubts, criticisms that were raised in recent time, the doubts etc. that keep the party disunited and even the provincial committee disunited—then it will be found that the class-roots of the doubts are petty-bourgeois revolutionism on the one hand and deeprooted reformism on the other.

However this revolutionism is not only asking questions. It is going in for antiworkingclass practice in the name of

the party. In the course of the strike of the corporation workers there was an alarming instance of antiproletarian outlook and agent-provocateur practice. The revolt of Mullick against these practices is a correct proletarian revolt, and the comrades concerned must be sharply condemned for their wanton dealings with the strike. The proletarian party does not indulge in such war against the people. It is not building people's front, it is smashing it. The second congress gave the direction to so conduct the strike as to build the people's front. Apart from this, such war against society, against the lakhs of workers, of other toilers—is an act of agent-provocateur. Only in times of war, such things are done; or civil war when there is no other way out. It seems the secretariat passed a resolution applauding this agent-provocateur tactics. If it has, it shows how deep anti-Marxist petty-bourgeois deviations have gone in the Bengal party. This is worse than the compact with professionals in UP or individual actions in Andhra.

The anarchosyndicalist saboteur was a common phenomenon at one time in the international movement and had to be fought ruthlessly. No quarter is to be given to him. In the earlier pages we have seen Lenin's estimate about this anarchist petty-bourgeois revolutionist tendency. To give the remaining part of that quotation from "*Left-wing Communism*:"

"Anarchism was often a sort of punishment for the opportunist sins of the workingclass movement. The two monstrosities were mutually complementary. And the fact that in Russia, although her population is more petty bourgeois than that of European countries, anarchism relatively speaking exercised a negligible influence during both revolutions (1905 and 1917) and during the preparatory period of these revolutions, must undoubtedly be partly placed to the credit of the bolshevism, which has always waged a most ruthless and uncompromising struggle against opportunism. . . . At its inception in 1903, bolshevism adopted the tradition of ruthless struggle against petty-bour-

geois semianarchist (or dilettante-anarchist) revolutionism..."

### *A Factional Grouping*

The danger to the Bengal party arising from this tendency has already been pointed out. The historical roots have been laid bare. Recent facts show that tendency has reached a dangerous stage—it is forming itself into a faction, because of its anarchist outlook it is being exploited by agent-provocateur (Anant Singh), and that it has been largely responsible for hastening the illegalisation of the Bengal committee, that it has nothing in common with the party principles about organisation, mass struggles, etc.

K's (N. K. Krishnan's) report now makes it quite clear that this group tried to develop an alternative petty-bourgeois line of action—long before the party congress. In 1947 one of them said to K that the present leaders of the party come mostly from TU or Congress movement; they are not revolutionaries. We extremists alone will be able to lead the party.

Politically these comrades were ultrareformists. At the time of the party congress they wanted to defend Joshi's line but found it impossible. They therefore adopted obstructionist tactics. They gathered round them a number of discontented elements to attack the leadership of the Bengal party and the CC.

Their talk referred to above dates back to 1947—is a significant fact. For it is now established that Anant Singh has been an informer since 1947—and it is quite possible that the initiative came from Anant Singh and fell on ripe ground.

It is very significant that Upen who had information about the arrests on 25th earlier than anybody did not reveal it to anyone. One shudders to think of the consequences if the present leadership had been jailed: Anant Singh would not have been exposed, and Upen who was a close associate of Anant Singh would have been virtually



in possession of the party. One should not belittle the idea of a deliberate plot arranged by Anant Singh.

Matters have not stopped here. The group has been on the offensive and as is the tactic of all international agent-provocateurs it is concentrating on those who hold the party together, firstly Robi. Secondly, to get into power themselves, they run down the secretariat. Once more taking advantage of the petty-bourgeois conceptions of organisation etc. they have so manipulated the discontent among the PC members that the secretariat, which itself has petty-bourgeois prejudices, is afraid to take decisions and offend the barrage of propaganda of a group even when the safety of the party is in question. The attitude of the members of the secretariat on the question of Dada, their persistence to defend a man who is obviously a scoundrel and a coward, their efforts to join in this gang's game to foist the blame on Robi, and finally their complete capitulation to this gangster propaganda—is the evidence that the party is in great danger of falling in the hands of anti-Marxist suspicious elements. All this because the political roots of this tendency have not been unmasked to the ranks, because their politics has been wrongly characterised—left-adventurism—and not nailed down as anti-Marxist, antiparty outlook.

This is where the current of petty-bourgeois reformism has brought the party. The openly antiworkingclass outlook of this group finds expression in persistent rudeness, arrogance to workingclass cadres and leaders. The PC secretariat also is guilty of antiworkingclass bias—but we will deal with it later after getting their opinion on Mullick's report.

### *Essential Task*

A drastic purge of the party in Bengal, reorganisation of the PC and secretariat, unmasking the social roots of petty-bourgeois revolutionism, reviewing the experience of recent workingclass and kisan struggles and on that basis chalking out a plan of closely linking these struggles with

the underground centre, working out concretely tactics of leading mass struggles in a rising period, detailed planning out of the tactics of tebhaga, tactics of the mass struggles on other fronts, ideological education through schools and Marxist literature, full utilisation of the capacities of all PC members, activities of all party members, a conscious effort to orientate the minds of the party members to the working class, immediate looking to, training and promoting of workingclass cadres to responsible positions, persistent attempt to proletarianise the party ideologically and change the social composition of our leading committees—these are essential if Bengal is to break through the present stalemate.

Robi (Bhowani Sen) should draft a detailed political self-critical report for Bengal—get it discussed in the PC and then a PB resolution should be drafted on that basis. PB should make arrangements to help Robi to train Hindi workingclass cadre.

#### VII. REVOLUTIONARY PHRASEMONGERING AND BETRAYAL OF MASS STRUGGLES—EXAMPLE OF AZAMGARH

The same retreat before militancy of the masses and then running to methods of individual action—petty-bourgeois revolutionism was in evidence in UP in Azamgarh where one of the biggest kisan upsurges has been practically sabotaged through vacillation before struggle and running away from it. The Azamgarh instance must be taken very seriously for no other instance brings to the forefront the hidden weakness of our party so much as this one. It is an instance where in the face of the revolutionary tempo of the masses the petty-bourgeois leadership really fled away in panic from the mass and then lapsed into individual anarchist acts. Everywhere as we see the party has to pay a heavy price for the petty-bourgeois composition of the party, especially its leadership.

It should be noted that the leader whom the PB has to criticise and charge with running away from the struggle

is the most popular leader and the leader of the peasants of the district. If the PB has to criticise him it is only with a view to see that such mistakes are not committed by him or anybody in future, to see that the entire party learns from the mistakes; that party members who come from the petty bourgeoisie take this warning seriously and remember that unless they discipline themselves through deep study of Marxism, through struggle, unless they consciously fight all the traces of social origin—individualism, lack of faith in the masses, faith in the power of intellectual arrogance—unless they proletarianise themselves ideologically as well as through the revolutionary experience of the party, unless they develop a pride in our working class and develop a sense of modesty—their social origin will betray them and the struggle at the most critical time.

This leader came from a zamindar family—an ex-terrorist—and can be taken to be a representative of rural intellectuals. He is the most popular leader of the peasants, genuinely loved by them. He has led also struggles in the past. But perhaps never did he see such tempo as at this time. When face to face with it, he fled from action in the name of preparing a Telangana. Typical petty-bourgeois revolutionist phrasemongering when running away from the battle. This is what happened. The situation in the district was as follows, as described in a PC resolution:

"The kisan struggle in Azamgarh, that is in ... in ... tehsils led by us, has risen to a distinctly higher level during the last three months compared to the struggles led by us in the same district either in 1946 or 1947.

"The struggles for land led by us during 1946 and 1947 were overwhelmingly struggles of kisans ejected in various ways for reoccupation and reinstatement. They were also struggles of shikmis for occupancy rights, and of all kisans for pastures, fallow, tanks, trees, etc., and against various forms of zamindari zabardasti. The struggles of agricultural labourers were in the form of strikes for higher wages, and also against begar. We also conducted anti-profiteering campaigns organising occasional seizures of

grain and cloth. But as yet there were no struggles for the direct and immediate abolition of zamindari through a general occupation of zamindari lands followed by refusal to pay rents. In the nature of things, either the earlier struggles had to lead to the latter type or to end in partial and shortlived victories followed by a fiercer counter-offensive by the zamindars and the government and a retreat by the kisan movement. In fact our wrong policy after December 1946 actually created the latter situation in 1947, though new struggles were also taken up during the year.

"Our campaigning since the provincial party conference has also raised new and more aggressive slogans, has pursued very aggressive tactics, and has been organised on a voluminous scale. The key slogan most widely popularised seems to have been 'Telangana in Azamgarh in 1948'. And this has been explained as an all-round seizure and distribution of zamindars' lands, total nonpayment of rent, hounding out the zamindars from the villages and occupation of their property, seizure of hoarded grain and cloth and the establishment of village power. Both the central and provincial governments and particularly Jawaharlal Nehru and Pant have been openly attacked as traitors. Holding of small and big meetings in breach of section 144 after throwing out open challenges to the police and zamindars has become common, including their being addressed by comrades with warrants of arrests against them. The same comrades also normally move about with kisan volunteers armed with lathis and ballams and the police have not been able to arrest them till now. The number of volunteers (mostly youth) is about one thousand. Their most popular slogan is: 'Teen ke badley tees denge', and at least during the last two months both the police and zamindars' lathials have been so much overawed that the former have not resorted to any arrests and the latter have not dared as a rule to commit the usual acts of violence and terror against kisans and our workers. The volume of this entire activity has also been considerable, including

more than 15 meetings with an average attendance of 4 to 5 thousand peasants, three rallies attended by between 10 to 15 thousand, and of course continuous movement of jathas propagandising in the villages. 2500 copies of a leaflet have been distributed all over the district and had a very good effect. Over 15 agricultural labourers' strikes have also been organised in this period. On the whole the majority of labourers and peasants in Ghosi and large numbers in Segri are at the moment not merely in a militant and aggressive mood, but also waiting for the order to 'go in to action'. On the other hand a number of zamindars have been evacuating their women and generally, as can be seen, their morale as also of their goondas is bad. The police, however, though innocuous for some time, seem to be preparing for firmer action and have reported to the ministry that we are planning a general offensive as soon as the ploughing season begins."

### *Mounting Peasant Upsurge*

This was the situation. The landlords were evacuating, the police dared not attack, the disillusionment was so much that we could openly attack Nehru and Pant. The agricultural worker—our class, together with the poor peasantry was marching at the head. No wonder then that it set the pace—in militancy; no wonder then that the peasant led by these could not have illusions about the Congress and we could attack Nehru straight. We were basing ourselves on our class.

The peasants were gathering round the party, awaiting its directions, with full faith, and when their enthusiasm and indignation had reached the boiling point, the party leader let them down. This is how one of the arrested PC members described the situation:

"A series of 20 meetings after the government offensive against the party had not only given confidence to the comrades who were trying to run away from action, but created a new life among the peasantry in the entire area.

Everywhere there was a general whisper in the villageside that the party is going to give a call for the offensive. Peasants began making their preparation and each one was anxious to see that when the call from the red flag comes he should not be found lagging. Poor kisans and khet mazdoors would assemble round our comrades and ask them in whispers, 'Babu, kab hukum milega' (when are you going to give the call?).

"The rally in X was the culmination of these series of meetings. Be it noted here that twice in this place and its surrounding villages announcements for Congress meetings were made. And in spite of threats from zamindars and their goondas, not only the meeting was very poor but it could not be held. Both the times none but a handful of zamindars turned up.

"After about 15 days the above meeting in the name of the CP was announced at the same spot. With whom do the people stand was the question on which the kisans were to give their verdict and they did give their verdict. The meeting was attended by not less than 8 to 10 thousand kisans (liberal estimate) all armed with lathis. This surging mass of militant kisans even surprised our comrades. Jai Bahadur Singh spoke for four hours. The place is a stronghold of zamindars and the kisans had come fully convinced that the party will give the order in this meeting. They had therefore come prepared to start the work of eliminating the village parasites from the area. The generation-old vengeance was clearly writ on their faces and their erect lathis indicated that they meant business. They waited and waited but the hukum did not come. They lingered on even after the meeting was over and some even asked angrily as to why the call is not coming. A small minority inside the party was in favour of giving the call but majority including Jai Bahadur said, 'This is an unruly mass and we don't know when it will stop.' Thus the 'unruly mass' obediently dispersed, angry and partly demoralised."

Here was petty-bourgeois anarchist-revolutionist funk-

ing the mass struggle and in a typical social-democratic manner calling the mass 'unruly mass'. The masses had called the bluff of our leadership—and the leaders betrayed their social origin.

These exterrorists or petty-bourgeois intellectuals who fled from the mass struggles were at the same time attempting to organise individual action on their own.

"According to him the leadership had no faith in the people and was thinking in terms of collecting arms and fighting isolated terrorist type of actions. These comrades (about 20) were thinking that they alone will fight, give heroic resistance and perish. The leadership now realises its mistakes and agrees that it was a very serious non-political terrorist deviation...a hangover of their past. Thus on the platform the leadership was communist, but away from the people it was a group of terrorists."

### *Phrasemongers Run Away from Mass Struggle*

Here we find the petty-bourgeois revolutionist who talks big about enacting a Telangana running away from the mass struggle and choosing the company of lumpen elements in preference to the revolutionary masses. Sabotage of mass struggle coupled with attempts which would only enable the government to launch action against the masses who will not know why they are attacked, who will be attacked for something which has nothing to do with their struggle and before which therefore they would have been helpless—such is the character of this deviation, this disease of the petty bourgeoisie.

It is extremely shocking that after this repudiation of the masses the PC which passed a resolution on the developments and sent the CC organiser there, did not even condemn these comrades much less remove some of them from responsible positions. It cannot be that the PC was unaware of what happened at the last mass meeting, before the leader came to PHQ, that he had just retreated before the masses.

In fact the CC organiser and PC failing to note what had happened forgot the enormity of the crime and went in for long-drawn-out revolutionary plans, forgetting that vacillators were in charge all over the district. No attempt was made even to educate them. On the other hand by acting as if nothing has happened, by not telling them at least that no revolutionary struggle is possible with such cowardly vacillations, the PC pandered to their revolutionism, and contributed to the debacle of arrests of the CC organiser and the DC members. The CC organiser and PC also openly pandered to and encouraged the association of DC leadership with the lumpen elements—a leadership which was preferring lumpen elements to the masses. Had the CC organiser and PC understood the real meaning of the last mass meeting, they would have known that to allow these comrades to associate with these lumpens was to encourage them in the betrayal of mass struggle.

The PC should have at least laid down that it was impermissible for comrades to raise the mass tempo to a boiling point, key up all expectations, and then give no slogan. This is reformist sabotage. It should have definitely stated that at that meeting—either a call, or some concrete organisational slogan, or a slogan of action on a certain next date—or a course of action—something which would have kept the mass tempo and convinced the masses that struggle was on, was imperative. A really revolutionary and resourceful leadership could have given a slogan of action that very day, especially if not giving such a slogan meant dissipation of mass tempo. Firstly, to make no preparations, and without preparations or minimum organisational measures bring the masses to the point of action and then in the name of preparation postpone action—is betrayal. In such cases the masses will not only lose their confidence in the party but their tempo might take distorted forms.

Instead of first nailing down these gross deviations—the resolution describes the situation in general, i.e. with-



out reference to the vacillations of the party leaders, and goes in for a long-drawn-out plan of revolutionary fight, migration from villages, etc., but misses the essential thing—that the vacillations are preventing even the preparatory economic struggle, leave aside its passing over into a political struggle. The resolution rightly rejects the slogan to declare a new government in the course of the struggle and correctly states that we must concentrate on organs of struggle etc. There was nothing wrong in anticipating developments, expecting revolutionary developments to take place out of the struggle and preparing for them. Not to have thought about future developments would be sheer opportunism, forgetting that partial struggles easily pass off into higher forms and phase. But the preparations must be real and not imaginary, i.e. they must address themselves to the situation that is most likely to develop on the basis of the realities of today, and not to imaginary developments. And there was not the slightest excuse to forget what was happening to this struggle in the immediate present.

### *Provincial Committee's Wrong Analysis*

In the course of the resolution the PC makes the most opportunist formulation and suggests that it is based on something from Lenin:

"For a basic political reason too the immediate 'formation' of a government is wrong. Why is it that we communists do not form governments by capturing power in the bourgeois way by suddenly 'dethroning' the government in power and seizing the reins of power? Because we believe in and honestly presume the policy of securing proper popular verdict through democratic vote before assuming power. The mere fact that we are the leaders of the mass movement, leading towards power does not constitute such a verdict. Only the support of the majority of the people secured through democratic vote constitutes such a verdict. (Explain Lenin)."

There never was and there never could be any sanction for this atrocious formulation in Lenin. To mention Lenin in this connection is to make a dishonest use of Lenin's name and mislead the ranks. The comrade concerned and the PC must be warned that it is impermissible to make use of Lenin's name in this manner to suggest as if the para is a faithful summarisation of Lenin's views. Lenin must be quoted. Cannot be allowed to be distorted.

It is obvious that the CC organiser and the PC who failed to note the running away from struggle, who did not attempt even to educate the leadership regarding the enormity of the crime, and who in face of it calmly drafted a revolutionary plan were guilty of phrasemongering petty-bourgeois revolutionism.

There would have been reality about their plans if they had seen that the struggle was being let down even in its early stage—then they would have taken precautions to unleash it and lead to higher forms.

### *Not Left-Adventurism—but Opportunism*

The secretary's note on the happenings after the arrest and in reviewing the developments from the beginning commits again a right-reformist error of characterising an ultrarightist anti-Marxist tendency as left-adventurism—as if the comrades concerned advanced slogans and actions which outstripped the consciousness of the masses—when in reality they were terrified by the masses and could not keep pace with them. A tendency should not be characterised by the words used by those who exhibit it, but by their deeds, actions. The secretary thinks that the whole trouble both with PC and DC arose because they took an insurrectionist position when it was a question of partial struggle only. This is totally wrong. The fiasco came because even the preparatory struggle was not launched so that the revolutionary possibilities could not be seen, developed. It is true that those who funk the pre-

paratory struggle talked loudly about revolution, but that does not entitle one to describe their position as 'insurrectionary', just as writing poetry about the moon cannot be described as a premature attempt at expedition to the moon.

The secretary has fallen into the typical reformist error of explaining all fiascos which are due to right-reformism as being due to left-adventurism, insurrectionism, so that one can sink deeper and deeper into reformism. This is how Joshi and the old CC always explained things and took the party into the morass of reformism. There was nothing wrong about foreseeing the revolutionary possibilities of the struggle—what was wrong was that the preparatory form—struggle for land, etc. which was to have unfolded the revolutionary possibilities, even this stage was sabotaged which made the PC look ridiculous. Naturally even when it is correct to expect revolutionary possibilities, one would look ridiculous if one could not organise even the preparatory stage. But then the fault is not that you thought of revolutionary possibilities. From the present experience the secretary practically draws the conclusion that it was only a case of partial struggle and it was wrong to have thought of revolutionary possibilities at all. Thus he practically comes to the conclusion of thinking of partial struggles only when partial struggles are conducted—this is the logical result of the way he poses the question—the connection between partial struggles and political struggles unlinked and reformism comes by the backdoor.

In justification of this the secretary further contrasts 'organised influence of the party' with the spontaneous movement of the masses. By making this contrast he practically argues that politics, revolutionary developments, etc. come only when you move the people (organised influence), and not when you are moving with the people (spontaneous movement). Once more through this contrast the link between spontaneous struggles and revolutionary developments is broken. It is true leadership of

the party is always necessary. But that leadership comes by intervening and leading spontaneous struggles—by organising them, not apart from them. In a revolutionary period the spontaneous activity of the masses increases tenfold and the party must lead it and see in it the growing revolutionary wave which must be given proper consciousness and organisation by the party. To contrast the two, to contrast the leadership of the party with the revolutionary initiative of the masses—is to belittle the masses and unlink the party from the mass struggles. This attitude towards spontaneous struggles is a bourgeois-reformist attitude, an attitude in spreading which Joshi took the fullest part. It is only one step short of denouncing the movement of the masses as anarchy—calling them unruly. Joshi distorted a number of accepted Marxist terms—among them spontaneity—to belittle the role of the masses. Such belittling makes it appear as if the main source to the revolution is not the masses but the party—a bourgeois idea. It is also a typically Congress idea. The Congress would start struggle every ten years—use the accumulated discontent and make it appear as if the Congress was the source of the struggle. In the intervening period it would sabotage strikes, peasant struggles, by saying it is anarchy. This and nothing else will be the result of the secretary's line.

#### VIII. CORRECT PROLETARIAN STAND ON KASHMIR

It was because of this reformism that on several important questions the tactical line of the party was forgotten, the tasks flowing from the strategic objective and class-combination were forgotten and some party comrades, including some CC members began to voice their past prejudices—petty-bourgeois radicalism—as the correct line.

The issue of Kashmir was an important issue on which there was a lot of confusion and because of this petty-bourgeois phrasemongering and the number of issues involved, clear tactics could not be developed. The problem in Kash-

mir was no doubt somewhat complicated. It involved the tactics of British imperialism and understanding of its tactics by us in the light of our new line. It involved the vital question of Anglo-American bases on Soviet border. It also involved the question of attitude in a dispute between Pakistan and the Indian union and brought up the general question of what attitude the party was to take towards them ordinarily in relation to each other. Then there was the question of the democratic movement which had heroic traditions of antifeudal struggle, though it was led by a bourgeois leadership. This bourgeois leadership and the movement led by it have been attacked mercilessly by the Pakistan propagandists, and their tool the Azad Kashmir government which is in reality the tool of the British imperialists. The agents of imperialism had repeatedly attempted through the leaders of Pakistan to appeal to communal feelings of the Kashmiris and win over Sheikh Abdullah on the basis of Islamic sentiments but they failed. Sheikh Abdullah himself would have liked to see the last of the maharaja long ago and remove him but he of course will not end the feudal landlord class—the jagirdari—and solve the agrarian question. The Indian union government, whose armies drove the raiders from Kashmir, was interested on retaining the feudal prince so that it could strike a big bargain against the democratic movement and was therefore bringing pressure on Sheikh Abdullah to postpone the issue.

This was the situation in which a correct proletarian stand was to be taken.

The hangover of the past controversies in the first place obstructed a clear understanding inside the PB. In the past, in the CC meeting which produced the Mountbatten resolution some comrades had taken an incorrect stand, saying that the Indian union—by which they meant the Indian union government—was more progressive than Pakistan and therefore we should say that imperialism would attempt to use Pakistan against the Indian union. This stand was correctly rejected and it was stated that

through partition British imperialism would attempt to use both against each other.

With the hangover of these controversies in their minds, some comrades would not see the actual roles of the various participants in the Kashmir tangle and wanted to criticise every attack against the raiders and Pakistan, if a similar attack was not made on the Indian union government. Their position practically amounted to treat the Indian union army on the same plane as the raiders and the logical conclusion of their tactics was, resist the Indian army also.

### *Imperialist Conspiracy for Anti-Soviet Bases*

A moment's thought should have told these comrades that their position was the same as that of British imperialism and that it was a position which betrayed the people of Kashmir into the hands of imperialists and their agents.

Firstly, we could not content ourselves with merely giving slogans when behind the raiders' offensive was the conspiracy to secure anti-Soviet bases in Gilgit and when Pakistan was being openly used for it. These comrades, by refusing to make any distinctions, were actually covering the complicity of Pakistan in the anti-Soviet conspiracy. It was so because having decided that there was no difference between Pakistan and Indian union government, by refusal to study the temporary, actual role of each in an incident, a particular conflict. It was our task to unmask those who were conspiring for anti-Soviet purposes at the behest of British imperialism and advance such slogans as would help the people in preventing this conspiracy from being successful.

These comrades got stuck because they had already made up their minds that it was immaterial whether Pakistan won or Indian union won—both would be anti-Soviet. That both would be anti-Soviet was correct and true. But the special exposure of Pakistan, special concen-

tration of fire on it was necessary to expose the anti-Soviet game of imperialism, of Pakistan leaders, *to the people*. In this particular instance Pakistan was playing the role of direct agent of imperialism, of anti-Soviet conspirator, an active role. It had to be nailed down. .

Secondly, though it is very correct to say that no distinction can be made between the Indian union government and Pakistan—by describing one as progressive and other as reactionary, it is wholly incorrect to state that the party does not adopt differential approach to the question of fighting both; that it fights both in an identical way. On the other hand it is incumbent on the party to choose such methods of fighting, exposing both as successfully unmask to the people the particular role they are playing in a given incident and do it in a manner which advances the democratic movement against both.

### *Differentiated Exposure of Pakistan and Indian Governments*

The question of Kashmir is a typical question. It was evident that Pakistan's attack was the result of imperialist conspiracy. The raiders were led by imperialist officers. They were trained by Pakistan officers. Here in actual life the imperialists were using Pakistan against the people of Kashmir, as their instrument; and also their instrument against the Indian union government which sought to steal a march over them, by getting Kashmir accede to the Indian union. Imperialist intervention was masquerading as Pakistan's intervention, as raiders' war, as Pakistan's conflict with India. It would be proimperialist to treat Pakistan and Indian union on the same plane in this instance. Why was Pakistan being used? The following quotation makes it clear:

"The underlying cause of the war in Kashmir lay in this state's geographical location, at the juncture of several state borders—including, in particular, the Soviet border. Anglo-American imperialist strategists aimed to

convert Kashmir into a link in the chain of military bases with which they are doing their best to surround the Soviet Union. They were particularly interested in the northern districts—Gilgit, Chitral, and a number of other small feudal principalities.

"After the division of India into two dominions the question of Kashmir's future was the cause of considerable anxiety to British ruling circles. In India, reactionary trends had not yet come out so openly as they have today, and there was a growing tendency for secession from the British empire and the establishment of an independent democratic republic. On the other hand, it was already clear that Pakistan would remain within the empire, and that this dominion would be entirely dependent upon British and American support. In view of all this, the Anglo-American strategists felt that, if they were to retain Kashmir as a strategic military base, they must get it included in Pakistan.

"Their plan was simple: armed intervention in Kashmir, to be launched from the territory of Pakistan, and to be carried to completion before the government of India could take countermeasures. They expected no serious resistance in Kashmir itself, for the following reasons" (*New Times*, No 40, 29 Sept 1948—"The War in Kashmir").

It would be seen that the imperialists did make a short-term difference between the two because of the powerful democratic movement in the Indian union.

Under the circumstances there was bound to be a differential approach, different slogans of fighting both, different ways and methods—all the more because of the fact that the democratic movement in Kashmir, the mainstay of progressive movement, had special illusions about the Indian government.

It was of course wrong to have talked as we did before the party congress, that the Indian army was a liberating army. It was also wrong for any communist in Kashmir to have pinned his faith in the Indian army. But once the Indian army entered with the sanction of the leader of



the democratic movement, and also in the background of imperialist conspiracy and the necessity to beat back the raiders, we could not take the stand virtually amounting to: resist the raiders, resist the Indian army. Certain comrades in fact wanted to take this stand though they were not saying it openly. But they violently reacted to any appeal to drive the raiders out, and they wanted simultaneously an attack on the Indian army.

### *Our Tactical Slogans*

Our tactic could only be:

(1) Fight and oppose and rout the raiders and Pakistan army, defeat the imperialist conspiracy.

(2) Expose and isolate the Indian union government, and the illusions created about it by Sheikh Abdullah, by demanding liquidation of feudalism and forcing the government to come out in the open and exposing its obstructions (Sardar Patel's statement).

(3) In view of the fact that we had no independent base, build that base by initiating a peasant movement to take over land, confiscate landed estates, etc. and thus become an independent force capable of mobilising the Kashmir people independently of Sheikh Abdullah, a force which will be the base when the inevitable conflict between the people of Kashmir and the Indian union government breaks out.

It is in the course of building this base, in pressing for the implementation of the democratic programme, that we criticise and expose the Sheikh's government as incompetent and then as compromiser. Our weakness in the movement makes people concentrate on verbal exposure which enables the compromisers to successfully isolate us and keep us away from shaping the destiny of the movement at the most crucial period. While comrades in Kashmir have been pursuing a rightist policy—main factor being to build an independent base, when one section talks about attack on the Sheikh only, certain comrades from outside,

without caring to study the situation in Kashmir, our weakness, the independent strength of the proletarian party, the interplay of conflicting forces, etc., want to lump the Sheikh along with others. They would not make a distinction between Azad Kashmir government and the Sheikh and want to concentrate fire on the Sheikh as the compromiser. Intemperate and wrong attack on the Sheikh who is still the leader of the democratic movement will play into the hands of reaction.

Today the economic situation in Kashmir is extremely critical and a big movement can be set ablaze—a movement in the rear of the Indian union army, a movement before which the Sheikh would have to render account. All exposure of the Sheikh must be connected with the development of the movement and must correspond to the conditions created through it. Such a movement, demanding at the same time arms for defence—serves both purposes—defence against Pakistan, against Indian union—security of the democratic movement.

The Sheikh should not be treated so lightly. It is significant that when he organised the liberation day, the representative of the Soviet Union attended it, while the representatives of Anglo-American bloc, except India, boycotted it. To concentrate fire on him, forgetting the other forces, without creating preconditions for successful fight against his compromising policy, is to play a reactionary role.

### *Reference to UNO & US Intervention*

The conflict between the Indian union government and the British imperialists became so sharp that it could not be settled at merely governmental level. Armies were used through Pakistan. After that it became still more sharp and India referred the question to the UNO, i.e. sought to bring pressure on British imperialism through the intervention of other imperialist powers. This reacted like a boomerang on the Indian union government and gave

opportunity for American intervention. Under these circumstances the role of the Indian union in referring to the UNO had to be exposed as seeking imperialist intervention rather than rouse the people through agrarian reforms etc., and the role of Pakistan, its continuous resistance to UNO, etc. to be exposed as working in conspiracy with the British etc. to fulfil the imperialist plan; and the people of Kashmir to be roused to the dangers of imperialist intervention. Once more a differentiated approach had to be made.

The imperialists have played their game cleverly. At one stroke with the aid of Pakistan they have secured control of Gilgit and we have failed to expose Pakistan's role in this treacherous conspiracy—all because of the pressure to equate both Pakistan and Indian union on every issue.

For the rest they have helped the raiders, Pakistan, to prolong the conflict, tire out the Indian troops, so that a bargain is struck for division of Kashmir and they get away with the Soviet border region—and all this in the name of doing justice to Pakistan. Today the situation is such that the Indian union, especially perhaps after the commonwealth conference, is prepared to agree to division—the capitalists are already demanding it—which would enable it to turn to the task of dealing with the democratic movement. The treachery cannot be exposed unless even now we make a differentiated approach in exposure and dispel the illusion about India, about the Sheikh's policy etc., while fighting frontally the raiders and Pakistan.

### *Settlement and Plebiscite—New Imperialist Move*

In these circumstances nothing is real, the proletarian party cannot influence the events at all, unless it builds an independent base through agrarian movement, agitates on the programme of antifeudal and agrarian revolution and initiates the movement to implement it. This is the basis of fight against all enemies, of successful isolation of the compromisers.

If an agreed division does not take place, imperialists will sponsor a plebiscite as an instrument of this division. In the plebiscite of course the question of whether Kashmir can remain independent will not be put. But can we ourselves raise the slogan today—Independent Kashmir? Firstly, one does not know the strength of the feeling for independence—i.e. existence as an independent state. The territory of Kashmir state, as it consisted before the invasion, consists of a number of nationalities—Pathan, Punjabi, Kashmiri, Jammu. Kashmir has always been a heterogeneous mass—and the common tie of democratic movement does not go beyond the Kashmir valley. Under these circumstances, there will be no such thing as independent Kashmir, unless it refers to the Kashmir valley only—and simultaneously other nationalities are allowed to be independent. It is quite obvious that in the case of nationalities, like Gilgit and others—independence would be just another name for imperialist domination. In fact it will lead to the plan of division which the Indian union and imperialists are planning in coming to terms with each other. Can the Kashmir valley at least remain independent? It seems difficult since it will have to rout armed imperialist conspiracies all round including the conspiracy of the Indian union and Pakistan interests. For us to take a lead in any such slogan unless we first know the prospect of independence would be to adopt a policy which might help imperialism only. Our stand must be such as helps the people of Kashmir in alliance with the peoples of the two big states, to achieve people's democracy as quickly as possible. To forget the machinations of imperialism when raising the slogan of independence is to act as the henchmen of imperialism.

### *Our Stand on Plebiscite*

In the plebiscite what stand should we take? Should we vote for Indian union? Should we vote for Pakistan? Should we remain neutral? It must be realis-

ed that plebiscite if it comes will come in spite of us, will come because of the failure of the democratic movement to settle the question in a revolutionary way—through a people's democratic Kashmir—uniting various nationalities and capable of defending itself. While our aim continues to be a people's democratic Kashmir, while we continue to fight for it, we are called upon to give our vote in the plebiscite. The vote we express in plebiscite is not an alternative to people's democracy; we are not choosing between people's democracy and the Indian union or Pakistan; nor are we asking the people to vote for the one or the other because one state or government represents freedom and the other does not. We will call on the people to vote one way or the other by reference to one criterion only—voting which way gives the people of Kashmir a better chance to carry forward their battle for people's democracy. In this connection, the strength of the workingclass movement in each territory, of the people's struggles, of the democratic movement, of the ties of alliance between the democratic movements in Kashmir and the two states—become the criterion. Taking into account all these factors, we would be justified in calling on the people of Kashmir to vote for the Indian union. We cannot ask them to vote for Pakistan nor can we remain neutral.

It is certainly wrong if one were to ask the Kashmiris to vote for the Indian union under the plea that the Indian union state or government represents freedom, i.e. by reference to the leadership of the Indian union, by making a distinction between the League leadership of Pakistan and the Congress leadership of the Indian union. But it is forgetting our duty if, when the issue is posed in spite of us—we were not to tell the people of Kashmir that inside the Indian union they have a strong ally in the matured workingclass movement—a strong ally in the advanced democratic movement—and therefore comparatively better conditions for carrying forward the struggle for people's democracy. It is refusal to take an

independent stand under the guise of not making distinction between two bourgeois leaderships—forgetting the movement of the proletariat and the masses and judging things solely by reference to the conflicts of the bourgeoisie—a special way of trailing behind the bourgeoisie.

#### IX. FRENCH INDIA—AND PROIMPERIALIST DEVIATION

The wrong and anti-Marxist understanding that it is reformist to distinguish between the tactics of imperialism and the Indian union government, that the proletariat can adopt a stand of neutrality and indifference when the question of imperialist possessions like French India or Portuguese Goa joining the Indian union is raised on the plea that there is nothing to choose between imperialism and the union government—lands the advocates straight into the arms of imperialism as it did the French Indian comrades. Some comrades in the PB definitely opined that it was wrong, opportunist to vote for French India joining the Indian union—when the question was raised through the plebiscite—since in their opinion there was nothing to choose between French imperialism and the collaborating Indian union government—which was already in the Anglo-American camp. The logical conclusion of such an outlook could only be the disgraceful and treacherous policy pursued by the French India communists when they propagated for French India remaining within the French imperialist union.

Such phrasemongers, appearing to be heroic, wishing to appear as uncompromising fighters against the national bourgeoisie only do service to imperialism—to another section of the world bourgeoisie. In deciding on the issue of plebiscite they only see the two bourgeois sections—imperialists and the national bourgeoisie, but forget the people—the anti-imperialist people of Pondicherry and other areas and the people of India, they forget the needs of the common struggle of both these, of the genuine anti-imperialist desire to get rid of foreign imperialism, and by

forgetting it allow the bourgeoisie to exploit it and pose as champions of the national independence. Besides they wrongly identify voting in the plebiscite with a choice between people's democracy and the collaborationist government.

In the past, before the second party congress corrected the line, there was the horrible deviation on the question of French India—when our comrades called on the people of French India to go from under the heels of French imperialism into the arms of free India. To call Indian union free India, to call joining Indian union freedom, was of course wrong and amounted to cheating the masses. But that is no reason why comrades, as a reaction to this stand, should develop another deviation which does not recognise the oppressive character and national humiliation of being under a foreign rule—a humiliation which is generally felt. But such mistakes will always be committed by those who fasten their eyes on the upper classes and not on the masses and the needs of the struggle.

How did the question of French India joining Indian union arise? Not only as a result of the Indian union government wanting to extend its territory, but as a result of the same anti-imperialist indignation to stem which British imperialists had to agree to instal Nehru in power. The driving force was the popular indignation. Under these circumstances what could be our advice to the people? We of course could not go on telling them that Indian union meant freedom but were bound to expose the class rule in the union. We were at the same time bound to lead the struggle against French imperialism which the national government was sabotaging. The bourgeoisie was concentrating on plebiscite to get the territory without an upheaval; it was a special form of compromise. Our task was to push ahead the struggle which we were leading, drive out the French—but under the reformist line pursued before the second congress, we withdrew struggle at the behest of national leaders and allowed the bourgeoisie to take the question at govern-

mental level. Our tactics should have been to drive out French imperialism—and people could have been united for that purpose—which would have placed us in a favourable position to deal with the bourgeois government. It is however clear that any idea of maintaining Pondicherry and other possessions as a separate state would have been totally unreal, considering the scattered character of the possessions, the extremely tiny character and the fact that they could neither function as a political and economic unit.

Once the question of plebiscite was raised and hope of a peaceful solution created—it became at least temporarily difficult to forge a united struggle against French imperialism, for its overthrow. People thought to vote would do the trick. What was our advice under these circumstances, considering the fact that there were absolutely no proposals for the existence of French India as an independent state? What would have been our advice if on the eve of August 1946 a plebiscite had been taken in India asking the people to choose between Mountbatten and Nehru—on the question whether power should be given to Nehru or not? We would have said this is a compromise, no freedom etc., but how would we have voted? Similarly here the question had to be decided on the concrete needs of the struggle. Did it help the Indian people's struggle for democracy to allow Indians to remain in the French union? Did it strengthen the alliance of the people? Did it correspond to the genuine anti-imperialist feelings of the Pondicherry and other people and the feelings of the anti-imperialist masses of India? Did it serve the united people to bring face to face with the bourgeoisie to fight the common anticapitalist battle? It is these questions that decide, and they decide in favour of the French possessions joining the Indian union.

Those who advocate that it is immaterial whether the masses remain in the Indian union or French union, decide the question solely by reference to the exploiting classes and forget the masses and their real movement and under



the guise of uncompromising fight against the bourgeoisie join the camp of imperialism.

It is this outlook, wrongly strengthened by advice from the French CP, that landed the Pondicherry comrades in the debacle. The French imperialists very decisively exploited the situation to make our comrades propagate for them and at the same time keep us out of the elections. Their party, the Socialist Party, knowing the mood of the masses did not come out openly with the slogan of remaining in the French union, it took an ambiguous stand: while only the communists campaigned for remaining within the imperialist union. We were thus isolated, attacked, etc., discredited as supporters of imperialism, while the real imperialist party posing as neutral carried the votes. In Mahe the situation came to a head and uprising with us remaining isolated and compelled to boycott the elections. In one or two other places also the CP was compelled to boycott the elections—so big was the anti-imperialist tempo. Thus those who forget imperialism are naturally forgotten by the masses.

#### X. THE FOREIGN POLICY AND INTERNATIONAL SITUATION

On this question also there is a tendency among certain comrades to repeat only general slogans about the Indian union government having joined the Anglo-American bloc, and repeating that repression in India is launched at the dictates of American imperialism—without caring to marshal out facts to prove the statement and arguing as if the majority of the people, including the petty-bourgeois followers of the Congress, have already accepted the fact that the government is collaborationist, that it is not pursuing an independent policy. Any attempt to prove factually by reference to concrete events is run down as 'defensive'; what they in practice demand is mere denunciation. Any reference to the sacrifice of freedom and sovereignty is run down because it is argued as no freedom exists—how can it be sacrificed?

This is once more not only a disregard for facts, or a question of approach, but an abjuration of the struggle against the bourgeoisie in the concrete, failure to realise that to be able to fight the bourgeoisie successfully on this issue, as on any other issue, you have to combine fight with struggle to isolate the bourgeoisie, otherwise they run away with the masses and capitalise the national sentiments and illusions of the masses.

Today when the world bourgeoisie is making an insane drive for war, when unknown to the Indian people the treacherous Indian bourgeoisie is conspiring with the imperialists for an anti-Soviet war, such failure to isolate, to fight the bourgeoisie on the plea of adopting 'offensive' constitutes a danger and menace.

This deviation which is nothing but running away from the concrete struggle ignores how deep the illusion of 'independent' foreign policy can be in a country which believes it has just won its 'independence' and 'freedom' and where the leaders of the national movement are for the first time at the head of the government. It also ignores the concrete form in which the bourgeoisie of this country is exploiting the past traditions and heritage to bolster up its satellite foreign policy. And thirdly, it totally ignores also the common forms, and changing forms which the bourgeoisie is using through its press, its government, its stand in the UNO to represent its foreign policy as an independent one.

### *Fight Against Anti-Soviet Propaganda*

Firstly, how does the international bourgeoisie carry on its anti-Soviet war propaganda? It is difficult to carry on such propaganda openly with the rise in the influence of the Soviet Union, with the rise in democratic and socialist consciousness of the masses, with the rise in the feelings of international solidarity. Bourgeois propaganda therefore precisely addresses itself to these facts, decking itself out as defenders of democracy and international cooperation and attacking the Soviet Union as totalitarian, charging it

with narrow-nationalism and aggressive war designs. It is thus that it seeks to confuse the issue and mislead the people. Side by side with it they brandish the atom bomb to intimidate opponents of war by threatening them that if they do not join the anti-Soviet front they would get the worst horrors; it also used the atom bomb to make the people, who have seen the horrors of a protracted war, feel that the war will be a swift one.

In *The International Situation*, Zhdanov exposed this tactical line of the bourgeoisie with great clarity:

"One of the lines taken by the ideological campaign that goes hand in hand with the plans for the enslavement of Europe is an attack on the principle of national sovereignty, an appeal for the renouncement of the sovereign rights of nations, to which is opposed the idea of a 'world government'. The purpose of this campaign is to mask the unbridled expansion of American imperialism, which is ruthlessly violating the sovereign rights of nations, to represent the United States as a champion of universal laws, and those who resist American penetration as believers in an obsolete and 'selfish' nationalism. The idea of a 'world government' has been taken up by bourgeois intellectual cranks, and pacifists, and is being exploited not only as a means of pressure, with the purpose of ideologically disarming the nations that defend their independence against encroachments of American imperialism, but also as a slogan especially directed against the Soviet Union, which indefatigably and consistently upholds the principle of real equality and protection of the just rights of all nations, big and small. Under present conditions imperialist countries like the USA, Great Britain and the states closely associated with them become dangerous enemies of national independence and selfdetermination of nations."

The expansionist bourgeoisie is exploiting the feeling for international cooperation. Through the UNO, through its subcommittees, it puts fake proposals for international cooperation, proposals which if accepted would bring the Soviet Union and the new democracies in the orbit of im-

perialist world; in the name of international cooperation on atomic research it seeks control of Soviet sources of raw materials; it seeks to secure such control because the capitalist bloc has a majority in the UNO and its subcommittees—and thus mislead the people. Every time it shows that its proposal has the majority behind it and that only the Soviet Union and new democracies are opposing it, carefully concealing the fact that the majority consists of capitalist governments who are united in their opposition to the Soviet Union, the developing forces of socialism—the class character of the struggle. This of course has to be exposed concretely on each separate issue so that bourgeois propaganda is paralysed. The building of the Anglo-American bloc, of the war bloc, is based on this ideological propaganda which is an attempt to secure some mass support and which must be exposed. Those who only speak about Anglo-American bloc but forget how in the concrete it is being built, and fail to counteract it only serve the warmongers.

The anti-Soviet campaign also takes a new form—charging Soviet Union with war designs—to cash in on the peace sentiment of the masses.

“Lastly the aspiration to world supremacy and the anti-democratic policy of the United States involve an ideological struggle. The principal purpose of the ideological part of the American strategical plan is to deceive public opinion by slanderously accusing the Soviet Union and the new democracies of aggressive intentions, and thus representing the Anglo-Saxon bloc in a defensive role and absolving it of responsibility for preparing a new war. During the second world war the popularity of the Soviet Union in foreign countries was enormously enhanced. Its devoted and heroic struggle against imperialism earned it the affection and respect of the working people in all countries. The military and economic might of the socialist state, the invincible strength of the moral and political unity of the Soviet society were graphically demonstrated to the whole world. The reactionary circles in the United

States and Great Britain are anxious to erase the deep impression made by the socialist system on the working people of the world. The *warmongers fully realise that long ideological preparation is necessary before they can get their soldiers to fight the Soviet Union*" (Zhdanov).

The warmongers' propaganda charging the Soviet Union with war designs has to be unmasked as one of the most important part of the fight against the imperialist bloc. To ignore it, and confine ourselves to shouts about Anglo-American war bloc, is to serve the warmongers.

Again as part of this ideological preparation the Soviet Union is attacked in yet another way—this time to appeal to the democratic and antifascist consciousness of the people and take advantage of bourgeois conception of democracy.

"In their ideological struggle against the USSR, the American imperialists, who have no great insight into political questions, demonstrate their ignorance by laying primary stress on the allegation that the Soviet Union is undemocratic and totalitarian, while the United States and Great Britain and the whole capitalist world are democratic. On this platform of ideological struggle—on this defence of bourgeois pseudodemocracy and condemnation of communism as totalitarian—are united all the enemies of the working class without exception from the capitalist magnates to the right-socialist leaders... The pith and substance of this propaganda is the claim that the earmark of true democracy is the existence of plurality of parties and of an organised opposition minority..." (Zhdanov).

Exposure of bourgeois democracy, of the bourgeois attack against Soviet democracy—is also a vital part in the fight against the war bloc. It will be thus seen that the world bourgeoisie cleverly adapts its forms of propaganda and fight to the consciousness of the people, change them according to needs, but there are certain comrades who would only like to reply with a stock argument, 'Oh, you are truly a war bloc'.

Along with this of course comes the exposure, unmasking of the concrete steps taken by the bourgeoisie in pursuance of their policy, the Marshall plan—the chief instrument of economic subjugation of building war bloc, western union etc.

In India also we find the bourgeoisie adapting itself cleverly to the consciousness of the people, utilising all the above means and at the same time exploiting certain national peculiarities of the situation. All these had to be systematically exposed.

In the beginning the bourgeoisie dares not come out openly with its plan of collaboration with Anglo-American bloc—both because of the anti-imperialist mood of the masses and because it itself was bargaining for good terms. It therefore took a characteristic pose—independent foreign policy—independent of both 'blocs'. Through this the bourgeoisie was appealing to the freedom and independence sentiments of the people, to the genuine feeling that foreign policy should be really independent of foreign imperialists. It was further cleverly exploiting through this slogan the traditional suspicions of the Indian people about big powers, and cleverly bracketing Soviet Union with imperialist powers.

### *Expose Nehru's 'Independent' Foreign Policy*

In this situation it could be exposed by first showing that 'independent foreign policy' at the best meant rejection of fight against imperialism and of cooperation with democratic and socialist nations—and this was the beginning of joining the bloc. The fact that the two camps are not power blocs, but the camp of people and the camp of imperialism had to be stressed, proved and the policy exposed.

Secondly, in actual practice, by reference to voting in the UNO, little assembly, Korea, Greece, etc. how the so-called 'independent' policy was a cover for serving the imperialist bloc—had to be proved.

Thirdly, by concretely showing that the stand of the Soviet Union on the concrete issues was democratic and in the interest of the people of the world including India; that the stand of imperialist powers was opposed to it—thus proving the two camps—one democratic camp and the other imperialist.

Lastly, both the union government and the imperialists had to be exposed by reference to such questions as the question of Indians in South Africa. Here the imperialist powers consistently opposed any proposal for racial equality; Soviet Union consistently supported India and racial equality. And yet on other issues the Indian delegates would go with imperialist racemongers and not the Soviet Union.

Thus concretely before the Indian people the two camps had to be proved—their stand and role explained; this alone gives reality to exposure of the policy of the Indian government. We had to negate concretely the propaganda that the two camps were mere power blocs—and this cannot be done by shouting about India government having already joined the Anglo-American bloc.

Through all these we had again and again to prove that the policy pursued by the government was fundamentally opposed to the interests of the Indian people and was a sacrifice and sellout of the freedom and sovereignty of the Indian people.

The second stage in the development of bourgeois policy reached very soon when the question of commonwealth appeared as a practical question on the agenda. Having in the meantime successfully sided with the Anglo-American bloc on almost all issues, the national bourgeoisie began to busy itself with the special Indian (or British dominion) way of joining the bloc—through the British commonwealth. How was joining the British commonwealth recommended? Now it was recommended on the ground of international cooperation—taking advantage of the feeling that exists among the people, of an obvious fact (Nehru's speech on the eve of commonwealth conference). Behind

it also was the unexpressed thought that this cooperation was to be against some other power or aggressor (Soviet Union) though people could be made to believe that it was directed against both America and Soviet Union etc.

### *Expose India's Alignment with the War Bloc*

The class character of this international cooperation had to be exposed as part of the fight against India joining the war bloc; it had to be exposed again as sacrifice of sovereignty and freedom of the Indian people—as joining the war bloc of imperialists.

Now with the commonwealth conference comes perhaps the more or less open phase which had started since the Burmese uprising, Malayan revolt and now is seen in its nakedness after the great victories of the Chinese liberation army. India is to be part of the commonwealth—under one name or another—Nehru has already come out in the open saying that in Southeast Asian countries the communists have been directed from abroad; a step for open emergence of India as part of the world anticommunist, anti-Soviet front. We will therefore soon have in Indian press open talk about danger to India from the Soviet Union, general propaganda about the CPI as Soviet fifth column etc. and the building of the war bloc has once more to be exposed by exposing the fact of joining the commonwealth, the real meaning of anticommunist hunt—a preparation to suppress democratic and socialist struggles at home and abroad for defending the capitalist order, for enslaving the Indian people, sacrificing the sovereignty of India in matters of defence, economic and foreign policies to safeguard the interests of the capitalists. We have to expose the propaganda of imperialists and the government to sidetrack attention from their treacherous designs and tell the people how the socialist Soviet Union is the real defender of the sovereignty of all nations and the interests of all toilers. A mere attitude of 'we told you so' fails to concentrate on the danger—just when peo-



ple are likely to see it most when it is coming out in the open; a mere attitude as if nothing special has happened, as if everyone had already seen the danger, as if the government had already announced its joining the bloc openly only helps the bourgeoisie when it can be exposed most successfully.

Along with this at all stages of policy comes the imperative duty of exposing the anti-Soviet propaganda which charges the Soviet Union with obstructing peace, with war designs. The imperialist press agencies representing UNO, atomic commission, Berlin most persistently spread anti-Soviet lies. The Indian bourgeois press repeats them, blacks out Soviet statements and makes destructive comments. All these days the comments were made to show that there were two war blocs. Now they will be made to show that it is the Soviet Union, the anti-imperialist camp that is the aggressor, that India's sovereignty is being threatened by the Soviet Union. It is this ideological propaganda that will be stepped up very soon, through the unofficial press. What we must remember is that it is a far cry from the formal joining by Indian union of the Anglo-American war bloc to the Indian people actively participating in it. By counteracting the specific manoeuvres of the bourgeoisie we can see that the masses are not misled, that the government's bloc is not supported but opposed by the people. The formal formation of the bloc, India government joining it, does not end the matter; the struggle has to be intensified to see that the ideological propaganda of the bourgeoisie does not mislead the masses, that they see its treacherous character.

Already in the Indian press all kinds of anti-Soviet slander is poured in, especially the language press; this itself is a part of the war-bloc propaganda. In this propaganda a persistent campaign is carried on that the Soviet system is not democratic and the usual arguments based on bourgeois democracy are given. This propaganda cannot be treated lightly. It is part of the capitalist propaganda to befuddle the minds of the Indian people and

make them participate in the bloc which the government is joining. To effectively counter this propaganda, through every available means including nonparty journals etc., is an integral part of the struggle against the policy of war-mongers. This once more needs factual exposures, and not mere shouting about Anglo-American bloc.

### *American Economic Aid*

Lastly, comes the Indian bourgeois appeal for American economic aid, an Asian version of the Marshall plan. Here again the different temporary phases through which this effort to get American aid goes, its direct effect on home policies, has to be exposed and clarified. Further, it has to be exposed also from the angle from which people will understand it most.

As on the question of foreign policy, so on the question of foreign aid the bourgeoisie moved cautiously. It attempted to get the foreign aid leaving the declaration about nationalisation of industries intact. But pressure was brought to give it up and also assure foreign capitalists about guarantee of profits—before aid could be talked about. Hence this obvious domination, surrender to foreign capitalists, had to be exposed. The bourgeoisie further relied on the desire of the people to develop their resources and for that purpose take whatever help they could get. Here we had to take the stand that all help from foreign sources was welcome provided it did not lead to political and economic domination and that the terms of Soviet agreement with other nations as well as the fact that the Soviet Union is a socialist country ensure that economic agreements and help will not violate national sovereignty. On this basis in fact we must develop a demand for opening economic relations with the countries of anti-imperialist camp and expose the government's refusal to do it.

The bourgeoisie behaves very cleverly and moves cautiously. At the UNECAFE it thundered against domination of foreign vested interests, created an atmosphere of

opposition to imperialism and then surrendered to American pressure by quoting the industrial truce and other resolutions—assuring full guarantee of profits and no nationalisation etc. It accepted that Japan be rebuilt industrially and supported American imperialism. In fact it accepted an inferior industrial status. All this had to be exposed and in two ways: (1) selling of economic sovereignty, (2) secondly, the point on which Indian people are extremely sensitive—industrialisation. It had to be exposed as perpetuating the backward economic structure and thwarting India's aspiration for industrialisation.

The economic aid that is sought has therefore to be exposed concretely as the sellout of economic sovereignty and independence, creation of new vested interests and perpetuation of the backward colonial status of India—and this too by concretely giving facts, not by shouting. In contrast the Soviet pacts have to be examined and shown how they develop the economic strength of the nation and keep national sovereignty inviolable.

The talkers and phrasemongers in the party jump at any reference to freedom of India, protecting the sovereignty of India, any attack that the government is sacrificing the sovereignty of India etc. and they consider such a reference to freedom, sovereignty, as sickening. For they argue that we are not free, we are not sovereign—how can then freedom and sovereignty be sacrificed or sold? Such childish arguments are advanced.

If anyone were to use the words freedom, independence, sovereignty, to create illusions that these exist, that the government represents them, to bolster the government, then it is opportunism. But when they are used as a weapon of exposing the freedom, of exposing the steps which attempt to tie down India to imperialist strings, of the various steps which take the Indian people more and more into subservience to imperialism—they serve the purpose of rousing the people to fight for and defend national sovereignty and freedom. All such exposures can only be made in terms of freedom and sovereignty. That

also corresponds to the illusions and consciousness of the people who can be made to understand the conspiracy of the government best in terms of betrayal of freedom and sovereignty. The standpoint of the phrasemongers would lead to an attitude of 'we told you so'. Such an attitude is abjuration of the struggle against the war bloc and refusal to fight the bourgeoisie just when its plans are coming out in the open. As is usual with these people, it is enough for them that the bourgeoisie has planned joining the bloc. But what about the people? How to rouse them and make them oppose the bourgeois plan? How exactly does the bourgeoisie seek to cheat them? These questions do not concern them. They want to hide their bogus radicalism under the plea of taking offensive, which in reality means refusal to fight for the masses.

The bourgeoisie may sign any pacts, but the people have the strength to defeat illegal pacts, provided the communist parties discharge their duty and therefore the communist parties must clear the way for the people to see the bourgeois conspiracies clearly and fight them. For this patient struggle is necessary—this of course does not enter their heads. Their stand does not go beyond oppositional critiques—but is never addressed to the task of winning the majority of the people.

### *Fight Against War*

And yet this task is of paramount importance. "The warmongers fully realise that long ideological preparation is necessary before they can get their soldiers to fight the 'Soviet Union' (Zhdanov). But our phrasemongers do not want to carry on an ideological fight for exposing the warmongers, for counteracting the ideological propaganda of our class enemies, for winning the people.

Whatever the shouters might say, "The communist parties must therefore head the resistance to the plans of imperialist expansion and aggression along every line—government, economic and ideological. They must rally

their ranks and unite their efforts on the basis of a common anti-imperialist and democratic platform and gather around them all the democratic and patriotic forces of the people.

"A special task devolves on the fraternal communist parties of France, Italy, Great Britain and other countries. If the communist parties firmly stick to their position, if they do not allow themselves to be intimidated and blackmailed, if they act as courageous sentinels of enduring peace and popular democracy, of the national sovereignty, liberty and independence of their countries, if, in their struggle against the attempt to economically and politically enthrall their countries, they are able to take the lead of all the forces prepared to uphold the national honour and independence, no plans for the enthrallment of Europe can possibly succeed" (Zhdanov).

Such are the tasks of communist parties of all countries.

Today their tasks have become all the more imperative. The world bourgeoisie led by American imperialism is seriously preparing for a new war of aggression—a war against the Soviet Union, against the forces of socialism and democracy, against the toilers of all lands and sovereignty of all nations. The war danger has become a serious danger. The formal formation of governmental blocs is only the first step. The bourgeoisie is making desperate efforts to split the people, muster them and get at least sections to participate in its war campaign. As a prelude it directs the offensive against the communist party and the working class in each country.

As part of this campaign it indulges in the vilest slander against the Soviet Union, to alienate the sympathy of the masses from the land of socialism. This propaganda must be ruthlessly fought and correctly answered. There will not be much difficulty in answering it before our masses. But it will have to be properly answered before the Congress followers, the petty bourgeoisie and masses not in contact with the party, to confuse whose minds desperate attempts are being made. There is no doubt that among the people

strong pro-Soviet feeling exists. But we also underestimate the strength of the anti-Soviet propaganda, the desperate efforts of the bourgeoisie to erase the feeling of sympathy for the Soviet Union. Exposure of warmongers' plans, of the bourgeois democracy, and propagation of the role of the Soviet Union as the defender of peace, democracy, freedom and socialism, freedom from capitalist slavery, of superiority of socialist democracy over bourgeois democracy—these are immediate tasks. In exposing the warmongers' plan, their plans to unleash a new war, we must fully take advantage of the feeling for peace, and explain what war will mean in terms of economic conditions, and massacre and destruction to the working masses. We must expose the government which is making a drive for this brutal war.

Today the war danger is serious; and the international situation is more critical than ever. At the same time the forces of the people, of peace, democracy and socialism, are strong enough to defeat the war plans. At such a critical juncture it is an unforgivable crime against the working class, against the revolutionary movement, to allow the CP to be isolated even temporarily from the masses or to be misunderstood by the masses, for the luxury of shouting phrases and laziness to study the concrete situation. Such phrasemongers must be declared to be the enemies of the working class and the party can have no truck with them.

#### XI. DEVIATIONS ON HYDERABAD ISSUE

Same deviations and wrong ideas exist on the important question of Hyderabad and the successive stages of the struggle there. Many comrades have taken a stand in contradiction with the party line and thesis and have criticised articles in the *People's Age*. This wrong outlook is shown not only by certain sections of the ranks, but sometimes CC members and even a member of the PB has been guilty of it.

Firstly, therefore we must start with the political thesis and the line it gave on the question of accession. Under the heading 'Programme of the Democratic Front', the following has been stated:\* "Abolition of princedom and feudal rule in the Indian... question will be decided by the wishes of the people."

It is thus clear that accession was to be exposed in terms of full democracy in the state, as a compromise with feudalism. The party congress did not give a general slogan—no accession but independence of states, nor did it give a general call to resist accession. Why? Because it was obvious that before there could be democratic resistance to accession, the people will have illusions arising from the fact that the national-bourgeois leadership was ruling the country. Only when such illusions were shattered could the large mass start fighting on both fronts—feudal reaction on the one hand and the Indian union capitalists on the other. The exposure of accession was to be a weapon to mobilise the people against both; to warn them that accession meant compromise with the hated feudal rulers—so that even if formal accession could not be prevented, there would be enough disillusionment in the immediate future to carry on the fight in the acceded state against the joining front of the bourgeoisie and the feudal princes. Naturally when the forces were ripe to oppose and fight accession, as well as feudalism—such a slogan could be given from the beginning. But it was left to the concrete circumstances whether slogan of open fight against accession could be given; what was however imperative at all stages was that accession had to be exposed by counterposing it against full democracy in the state.

The party congress did not take the position that the feudal states should remain independent; to take such a position would have meant joining the imperialist-feudal camp. Nor did the congress take the stand that accession

\* See this volume, pp 85-86.

was a democratic advance to be supported etc. The fact however that accession was a compromise was not to mean that in fighting this compromise we lend support to stabilising the position of imperialism and feudalism. The party congress very correctly posed the problems of accession in relation to full democracy—and thus set a standard which was a weapon of fighting the imperialists, feudal princes and the bourgeoisie. It is necessary to remember this because the stand taken by certain comrades in fact amounted to taking a position of 'no accession'—the slogan of Kasim Razvi, nizam and imperialists. The position taken by the Hyderabad committee virtually amounted to 'independent Hyderabad', no accession, etc. Such a stand, howsoever heroic it may appear to its sponsors, by its hostility to the Indian union government—was nevertheless a profeudal proimperialist stand.

Also on the question of the significance of Telangana the thesis of the second congress took a clear-cut stand\*: "This is borne out by the struggle in Hyderabad, where... paralysing the influence of the bourgeoisie."

### *Slogan of 'Telangana Way'*

It is clear that the congress made a sober estimate of Telangana struggle of unprecedentedly high level—armed struggle etc.—which typified the period, shows to what height revolutionary action of the masses can rise—pass off into actions for seizure of power. But while telling the masses and the party ranks this truth, which reformism was hiding from view, the thesis does not childishly call for enacting Telangana everywhere, irrespective of strength, mass following, etc. just because the struggle has risen to this great height in a part of Hyderabad. In fact even for Hyderabad as a whole it does not give 'Telangana' as the immediate slogan of action, for before there could be Telangana there must be fighting people—and people start their fight on concrete day-to-day

\* See this volume, p 107.



or elementary political demands before they reach the highest form of political struggle. It is true that in some of the speeches at the party congress comrades called for the Telangana way—and that was very correct too. For the course of the Indian struggle in the immediate present must march along the Telangana way. But that does not mean that today all that you have to do is to shout, 'Telangana' and can rouse the masses to enact Telangana. Neither any speakers nor the party congress gave any such call. If the situation had been ripe for it then the party would have given the call for armed insurrection all over the country—for Telangana all over the country means armed insurrection of the people against the government.

It is necessary to remember this point because the wrong criticism coming from these comrades lays great stress on extending the armed conflict, it loosely talks about guerilla warfare all over the country, general strike and fight in the rear of the Indian army itself.

There could however be no two opinions that if we could start a successful guerilla warfare all over the country, we should do it. Nor could there be a difference of opinion that if we could strike successfully in the rear, we should do it. The question is: could our slogan inspire the people to action and hold up the hand of the government?

### *Hyderabad Situation After Party Congress*

What was the situation after the party congress which gave a call to organise the Hyderabad Day?

(1) The great struggle of the people of Telangana was not yet in the consciousness of our masses also. It had to be brought in and popularised among the people—ours as well as the remaining mass.

(2) Immediately after the congress conditions of virtual illegality for the entire party, temporarily disorganising its work and certainly affecting its mobilising capacity for the time being—its agitation and propaganda being

very much handicapped. Within two to three months of the congress a reign of terror in all the southern provinces, including Andhra which constituted the rear and main base of help to Telangana, closing down of all party papers, organs, presses—widespread arrests, closing down of the journals and party press in almost all provinces, all leading members either underground or arrested—all mass leaders in the same position.

The party of the working class had to reorganise its ranks; it was temporarily thrown on the defensive.

(3) Among the people of Hyderabad—barring the people of Telangana—the party had hardly any independent standing; the mass was either under the reformist influence of the right or left section of the State Congress, or neutral. The backward consciousness of this mass gave a strong basis to the reformist and compromising policies of the State Congress leadership. This mass had never seen struggle before. This was the first time that a section of them was actually participating in struggle while the remaining were interested spectators, with all sympathy for the struggle. Firstly, even this sympathy was not so widespread. The illusions about the Indian union leadership were very great. These illusions had their strong basis on the hope of the backward masses which, for lack of experience of struggle, always think of settling the issue of struggle peacefully, without a frontal fight, through negotiations. These illusions were all the more strengthened by the belief that the Indian union leaders with the army at their control can in no time liberate Hyderabad. The armed strength of the Indian union became a substitute for mass struggle of their own. The reformist leadership was thus able to canalise the discontent of the masses into safe channels—reliance on Indian union and slow-down and sabotage the mass struggle. More and more it was propagated that with accession all problems would come to an end, nothing should be done without the consent of the leaders of the Indian union.

(4) The leaders of the Indian union while they were bargaining with the nizam and British imperialism, continued to keep up the pressure of popular unrest through the reformist leadership and also frighten the nizam and imperialists with the communist danger. The bourgeois press was representing accession and the demand for accession as a big democratic demand for the unification of India. The anti-imperialist masses throughout India, and especially in the provinces bordering the nizam's dominion, were taken in by it. In fact the bourgeoisie was able to exploit the traditional antinizam hatred of the Marathas, Kannadigas and Andhras for their own purpose. They were thinking that if the suzerain who lorded over their nationals for centuries, and whom in the past they had defeated in battle after battle (this applied especially to the Marathas) could now be made to accept the suzerainty of their leaders—it would be a big triumph. This circumstance combined with the fact that the ruler was a Muslim while the subjects were Hindus, that there was religious and political discrimination against the Hindus—was enough to blind the backward masses to the needs of complete democracy and abolition of the nizam's feudal regime. It was believed by large sections that Indian union government representing the Hindu interests would liberate them from the yoke of Muslim rule. The bourgeoisie and its press were either silent about Telangana or slandering it. Their aim was to alienate the sympathy of the masses in Hyderabad as well as outside.

(5) The leaders of the Indian union—while they were fooling the masses thus, while their press was campaigning against the nizam, while some of the State Congress leaders were threatening deposition of the nizam and while Sardar Patel was uttering threats of dire consequences—were safeguarding their rear by taking every step about Hyderabad after full discussion with Mountbatten.

This was the situation after the party congress and the tasks directly followed from this situation.

These were:

(1) To extend, deepen and broaden the peasants' revolutionary struggle in Telangana by spreading it to new districts, to ensure the safety and development of Telangana by popularising it among the masses.

(2) It was obvious that not a single step forward with the other masses in and outside Hyderabad was possible unless the talk of accession had been exposed in relation to end of feudalism and achievement of full democracy, the illusion about Indian union leaders liberating the land had been smashed by exposing their compromising policy, and the paralysation of the people who relied on the government to act done away with etc. The government's compromising policy and its plan to isolate and crush Telangana could be defeated only if the people were made to see through its accession demagoguery etc. Only by freeing people from these illusions—especially people who were not under our political influence, could we hope to bring about solidarity actions, demonstrations and swing the people into antinizam action.

Any general call to action without exposure etc. was out of the question. Wherever we could organise local struggles we of course had to do. In short, to develop the struggle in Hyderabad, both inside and outside, we had to make a serious endeavour to build a democratic front to develop the struggle and fight the compromisers, and as a beginning we had to seriously undertake the task of isolating the national bourgeoisie by exposing and unmasking its policies. An underestimation of the task to isolate the bourgeoisie was bound to keep the masses under the bourgeois influence and hamper the development of the struggle.

(3) Our task further was to come forward in our propaganda as uncompromising fighters against the nizam, uphold the Telangana peasants as the revolutionary uncompromising fighters fighting with arms against the nizam and in contrast to the demand for governmental

intervention, make popular the demand—'Arms for Telah-gana, arms for the people of Hyderabad'.

This was the only course left open to us—considering that we had to do even the preliminary task of winning over the people in Hyderabad for a struggle—leave aside armed struggle against the nizam. All talk of immediate widespread action was of course the usual dream of phrasemongers.

The uneven character of the party's influence, of the consciousness of the masses, and the disorganisation created by repression could be seen in the call for Hyderabad Day given by the party. In a few places we observed the day. In Bombay nearly 10,000 workers came on strike—thanks mainly to the Telugu workers from nizam's dominion.

The main point however is not repression only. The point is that one Telangana did not mean that everywhere the masses had reached the same consciousness and were only waiting to get a word from us. The hard task of separating the masses from the bourgeoisie faced us—and without it we could not march a single step forward.

Side by side with local struggles therefore we had to concentrate on unmasking the policies of the bourgeoisie and disillusioning the masses. This we did persistently, exposing from the beginning antirevolutionary, anti-democratic, compromising character of accession and teaching the people the necessity of struggle.

This we did. Within a couple of months after the party congress, the question of accession came prominently before the people and we exposed it as compromise, demanded full democracy and arms for Telangana. With the barrage of propaganda the knees of some of our comrades began to shake and they demanded an answer in terms of 'yes' or 'no' to accession. The bourgeoisie wanted such an answer to expose us; our comrades susceptible to the daily bourgeois propaganda wanted to give a heroic answer 'no accession', which would have enabled the bour-

geoisie to bracket us with the nizam and befool the masses. that we stood for the independence of the nizam. The first reformist deviation appeared in the garb—failure to understand that the proper revolutionary reply to the nizam, imperialism and the Indian union was: 'end of autocracy, full democracy, accession a compromise'.

### *Three Classes—Give Different Slogans*

Three classes had given three different slogans—independence of feudal Hyderabad was the slogan of feudal interests—aided by imperialism. Accession to the collaborationist Indian union—the slogan of the bourgeoisie. End of autocracy and full democracy—the slogan of the proletariat. Some of our comrades who wanted us to answer 'yes' or 'no' to the question of accession, in reality pleaded for the acceptance of either the bourgeois or feudal slogan and rejection of the proletarian slogan.

In the struggle for the isolation of the bourgeoisie we had to persistently expose the opportunist character of its negotiations with the nizam, the terms offered, the role of British imperialism—the final terms offered to the nizam—which brought into concrete terms the compromise that the bourgeoisie sought to hatch.

Meanwhile the nizam sought to create a diversion by staging communal massacres with the aid of razakars. The plan of the nizam was simple. Reenact the scene of western Punjab and eastern Punjab, set in motion lakhs of refugees to create chaos and anarchy in the Indian union. It was a threat to the Indian union government—that if it dared intervene, the reply would be widespread massacres which would send lakhs of refugees inside the Indian union creating chaos and anarchy; and which as a retaliation would bring counterriots in the Indian union—massacre of Muslims etc.—paralysing the entire administration, and thus making it impossible to carry on military operations. This was not only the plan of feudal elements but also of imperialism—especially the tory imperialists

who were in close touch with the nizam through Monckton. The labour-imperialists and Mountbatten themselves would have been glad had the plan succeeded and forced the Indian union government to accede to the nizam's demands.

That the plan was a serious one could be seen not only from the threats of Kasim Razvi and expectation of wholesale massacre in certain foreign newspapers immediately after intervention, but from the great relief and sense of elation which the leaders of the Indian union showed when they found there were no riots. Rajaji's thanks giving, congratulation to the people etc. were not accidental. The Indian union leaders believed riots would take place all over India. They had the experience of August 1947 riots and they were in terror of the new. They conveniently forgot that the August riots could be provoked because of the ground prepared by them.

They tried to avert riots by seeing that the press did no communal propaganda on the issue, that the conflict with the nizam was not given a communal turn through the press; anyone who read the press could easily see that no communal capital was created out of the razakar atrocities by the press, that the victims of razakars were not made as being Hindus etc.—this was the bourgeois reply to feudal plans. Nonetheless the bourgeoisie, perhaps warned by imperialism against the consequences of intervention, did stand in terror of communal riots. It completely underestimated the tempo of the people and forgot the people could be diverted into such antipeople channels only by the national leadership and no one else.

This then was the imperialist-feudal plan to decide the issue of accession in their own favour, to enforce no accession but virtual independence of the nizam where British capital could have a full run and which could be used as a bastion for independent imperialist intervention against the people of India—a bastion independent of the bourgeoisie.

### ***Our Slogans Against Imperialist-Feudal Plans & Bourgeois Compromise***

This plan had to be unmasked and exposed, it had to be fought; that the nizam and imperialists should hit on this plan had to be explained also by reference to the compromising policy of the Indian union government, the vacillations and retreats of the Indian union government before the plan had to be unmasked. The razakar gangs—the counterrevolutionary gangs organised by feudal reaction and imperialist reaction—had to be taken seriously; the people both in Hyderabad and outside to be warned that the attack could be defeated only by arming the people, by the forces of the people—and thus once more linking the struggle directly with Telangana. The peasants of Telangana to be put forward as the heroic fighters who alone have successfully met the attack of the razakars. Contrast the trek of refugees in other areas with the stand of the peasant in Telangana.

The concrete slogan of action was no doubt armed resistance, any resistance to the nizam. But of course there was very little possibility of action being developed in a wide scale because of the backwardness of the movement in other parts, the sabotage by the State Congress and the illusions about the Indian union leadership. In certain places militants demanded arms to defend and we could not give them in any quantity. By April it was already too late to procure arms in any large quantity and send across. Nonetheless efforts were made. But the point is that the main weakness was not yet arms—though armed resistance in certain border areas even by bands of individuals would have put heart in the people and rallied people of certain localities—but all this on a very limited scale.

The Achilles' heel lay in our organisational weakness and inability to break through the reformist sabotage and lead independent mass actions against the state, the nizam, leading to attacks against seats of oppression, police thanas, etc., fighting with whatever arms available even in the



process of disarming the police and razakars and arming themselves. Except in Telangana we could hardly progress anywhere in this direction, which made it all the more necessary to expose systematically all the reformist illusions.

This was rendered imperative because in the absence of mass action the razakar atrocities made the people in Hyderabad as well as outside look more to the Indian union and its army for aid. The consciousness that there was a people's way out was blurred and in exposing the nizam's plans—the plan of people's fight had to be put across and the compromising plan of the bourgeoisie which encouraged the nizam to come out with the razakars had to be exposed.

The things to be noted are that even in face of the atrocities committed by the razakars the slogan of armed resistance to the razakars, arms for Telangana, people's resistance—were propaganda slogans and not yet slogans of action over any part of Hyderabad barring Telangana.

They could not yet be slogans of action because the illusions about the bourgeoisie were still strong.

And secondly, because apart from exposing these illusions through propaganda, we ourselves had not had any strength to launch independent action on local or political issues which would have enabled sections of masses to shed these illusions quickly. Thus the bourgeois sabotage could prevent a united front of popular forces against the nizam.

This also meant that while exposing the Indian bourgeoisie we should expose the leaders of the State Congress and the Socialist Party who were aiding the repression against Telangana, preventing militant joint action. At the same time we had to appeal for a united front to their ranks.

Could we have given any other slogans—either as propaganda slogans or slogans of action? Could we have called for instance a general protest strike for arms to Telangana or the people of Hyderabad?—or a general call to the people of Hyderabad to raise against the nizam?—or call to the people to carry on guerilla warfare, or to extend

and follow Telangana?—or could we have asked the people of the Indian union to resist or overthrow a government which was betraying the people of Hyderabad? It may sound ridiculous to ask such questions, but yet it is precisely these questions that are being raised by certain CC members.

We could have certainly given all such calls without of course affecting or influencing anybody and bringing the masses even one step nearer shedding their illusions. These slogans would have ended in air, without teaching anything to the masses; on the other hand they would have helped the bourgeoisie to erect a wall between the communists and the masses.

The real task was, as we have seen, to popularise Telangana as the independent peasant resistance under our leadership and expose the compromising policy of the bourgeoisie, as an instrument of releasing the masses from the hypocritical influence of the bourgeoisie before they could act, and unmask also the imperialists and the nizam.

#### *Popularise Telangana—Expose Bourgeois Intervention*

If some of our comrades were blind to the realities, to the moods and consciousness of the masses as they existed at any particular moment, the bourgeois leaders were carefully addressing themselves to the masses—study their mood and militancy. The leaders knew very well that at any decisive moment—like that of intervention—the mood and passion of the masses might overflow the channels of safety and in such a situation the revolutionary appeal of the Communist Party might fall on fruitful soil. Therefore on every occasion when a clash between them and the nizam seemed imminent they turned the barrage of their ideological propaganda against the communists—the Communist Party in Hyderabad, with slanderous rumours of communist-razakar alliance. The obvious aim of this propaganda was to alienate the sympathy of the people from the fighting revolutionary masses of Telangana, from the

Communist Party—to isolate the vanguard, the working class.

The barrage of this propaganda, repeated in hundreds of bourgeois papers, was a powerful weapon of creating confusion among sympathetic elements and driving a wedge between the party and the masses in Hyderabad and outside. How it put the party on the defensive even causing a partial collapse of its propaganda is clear from the resolution of the Andhra PC which says that our ranks became tongue-tied before this propaganda, could not reply effectively to it till the provincial centre had given directions, could not even make use of the facts which were daily pouring in—facts about the glorious fight our comrades are putting—about their deaths on the battlefield, when scores of them died fighting the nizam's forces.

The fact that the compromisers who were betraying the struggle could get away with this slanderous propaganda at a time when reports of our battles with the nizam were daily pouring in, that they could dumbfound our ranks in certain places, that they could take the offensive when we were having repeated clashes with the nizam's troops, showed how deep were illusions about them, how big yet was their power of betrayal—both of which we could only ignore at our peril. The compromisers however never forgot the task of isolating us in the class battle, though our phrasemongers were willing to make a present of the entire mass to them.

Once more this propaganda had to be exposed, nailing it as the screen to cover the nefarious compromise that the bourgeoisie was hatching—and pointing out who was fighting uncompromisingly in Telangana, who was dying in battles of resistance to the nizam and who was handing over revolutionaries from Hyderabad state to the nizam's police.

The bourgeoisie and its press used every issue to justify intervention and military operation, to create a background for it. Taking advantage of our weakness, low organisa-

tional influence, its propaganda began to make out that there was only one alternative to razakar atrocities—and that was intervention of the Indian union government.

The two classes—feudal and bourgeois—were thus busy pushing their own alternative: 'no accession, no intervention'—'accession, intervention'. Both were united in pushing away the proletarian alternative of end of autocracy and establishment of full democracy. It is significant that the bourgeois government when it began military operations against Hyderabad, gave as one of its main reasons the anarchy and atrocities created by the razakars. Thereby it not only wanted to assure British imperialism that no radical social changes were contemplated, but also appeal to the backward mass which now was thinking only in terms of the razakar atrocities.

Taking advantage of the helplessness of the people created by its own sabotaging policies the bourgeoisie began to strengthen the feeling for intervention as the only way out. The fact that in the meantime we could not extend Telangana, nor organise anything in Andhra, nor extend the movement to a point when people could regard it as a serious challenge to the nizam, as an alternative way out, sustained the illusion. We ourselves could have and would have taken the position of 'no intervention' if the masses had been in action under our leadership; for once in action they would have seen that bourgeois intervention is no way out, is not liberation but another slavery.

In the given situation however we could only take the stand of exposing the intervention, its aims and objects, warning the people that they would be cheated, that people including the heroic peasants of Telangana would be crushed and reminding them of the general demands of full democracy, agrarian programme, etc. Had we taken any other slogan to satisfy some of our phrasemongers—for instance 'down with intervention' etc.—not only the bourgeoisie but the very people whom we had to win over would have called our stand as identical with that of the nizam and the bourgeoisie would have been given an op-

portunity to isolate us, Telangana, from whatever sympathy there was for us, for our heroic struggle of resistance. Such a stand would have helped the bourgeois reactionaries to crush the Telangana peasant with the backing of popular support. The phrasemongers are not as innocent as they look.

### *Tactics in the Face of Actual Intervention*

On the eve of intervention and immediately after intervention certain comrades, including one CC member from Bengal, seem to have lost all political perspective, became completely unbalanced and alien to all sense of responsibility. Fantastic formulations and suggestions were made as if the event was an Edgar Wallace mystery requiring a hair-raising solution.

Y from jail demanded that both before the intervention and after we should have raised the slogan: Resist the army of the Indian union!

V demands the same and says there is no difference between Nehru and the nizam—the march of the Indian army is an act of imperialist aggression.

Nageswara Rao says—when the Indian army marched there should have been general strike in the rear of the army, sabotage and guerilla warfare. Even now he says that the party should go in for guerilla warfare in its strong bases.

B wants to escape by throwing all the blame on the centre, its failure to supply arms, etc. and now he says nothing is possible, not even resistance in Telangana. He suggests laying down of arms in Telangana, burying them in safe places—and he is able to suggest this because he wants to thrust all responsibility on the centre.

We must take all these formulations seriously. To take V's formulation first, is it correct to state that there is no difference between the nizam and Nehru? It would be correct only if the question was: did Nehru represent any different social order than the nizam? It is correct to state

in reply to this question only that both Nehru and the nizam ultimately represent a compromise between the feudal and capitalist order, that in the final analysis both stand for the present order, though each would like to have a privileged position over the other.

But what social system the two represent in relation to the masses is not the issue of present discussion. V here is echoing past controversies which have been already settled. Before the party congress we did make a distinction between the order represented by Nehru and that represented by the nizam, saying that the former was democratic, progressive and had to be supported in its fight against the latter. It was practically a shamefaced theory of capitalism being inevitable for a certain length of time and an equally shamefaced support to compromise. Here accession was regarded as a step forward, etc.

But in the party thesis we took a correct revolutionary position, distinguishing ourselves from the bourgeoisie and the feudal princes, the line of fighting both and advancing independent proletarian slogans and solutions, and fighting both did not mean just lumping them together, but understanding the different positions taken by both in their conflict and fighting them in respect of the positions taken by them (no accession—accession etc.). The old distinction which was based on one being progressive—then support to one against the other—was given up. This did not mean here that we obliterate all distinctions between feudal and bourgeois elements—a distinction which has a fundamental and vital bearing in relation to the masses. For instance in the foregoing analysis itself we have made a distinction between the 'no accession' stand of the nizam and 'accession' stand of the Nehru government—to be able to concretely fight both, not to support one against the other, but on no account to obliterate the distinctions. If really there was no distinction between the two stands we could have come out saying that Kasim Razvi is an agent of Nehru who is raising the razakar menace only to side-track attention. This stand becomes and appears absurd

because it fails to see that the exploiters also must often clash—opening the eyes of the masses. It really comes from a wrong stand which regards the exploiter as a homogeneous mass with no fissiparous tendencies, i.e. it exaggerates their strength.

But V's formulation is made with a purpose—to justify resistance to the Indian army marching into Hyderabad—as if there was anyone who took a stand that the army should not be resisted because it was a liberationist army, or because it was the army of Nehru, the democrat. To justify resistance to Nehru's army it is not at all necessary to equate Nehru with the nizam and our slogan of a people's democratic government itself is a slogan of liquidating the Nehru government. But the question in relation to Hyderabad was: could we give that slogan, resist the Indian army?—if there was no difference between Nehru and the nizam as V suggested then of course we could give that slogan—whether it became a slogan of immediate action or not, it would have been a slogan of rallying the people, if the masses of Hyderabad hated Nehru as much as the nizam, if they themselves did not make any distinction between the two. One will now realise how ridiculous and utterly irresponsible such statements are. To forget the difference between an autocratic and most-hated feudal prince, completely isolated from the people and who would have crumbled into dust had the masses not been held in leash by bourgeois saboteurs, and the national bourgeois leaders, who are still national leaders, who are still able to throw us on the defensive when we are fighting the nizam most, about whom enormous illusions exist in the minds of the people, illusions directly flowing from the oppositional past of the bourgeoisie, is playing with politics. The heroic and high-sounding phrase—no difference between Nehru and the nizam—howsoever revolutionary it might sound to the ears of the petty bourgeoisie, is in reality a special way of rendering service to the bourgeoisie. Here the task of isolating the bourgeoisie is so completely forgotten, that even in a rapidly-

developing situation when the masses are shedding their illusions quickly, the proletariat will be repeatedly isolated and never be able to lead the masses.

No distinction between the nizam and Nehru is not an accidental formulation for V. He made a similar formulation—no distinction between Indian collaboration and French imperialists and advocated neutrality in the French India plebiscite. As we have seen this 'no distinction' slogan is only a cover to fix attention on the exploiting classes and forget the masses.

V's second formulation—Indian union's intervention is war of imperialist aggression is also wrong. It can only be described as enforcement of compromise with feudalism with the aid of military force. The instalment of Nehru government in August 1947, of course could not be described as an act of imperialist aggression, but betrayal, compromise, etc. V's formulation is a horrible formulation because it forgets the actual class relations—the real character of the conflict and what is more, entirely forgets the position taken by the masses—the anti-imperialist masses inside and outside Hyderabad and leads to a strategy which does not take the masses into consideration. The formulation is made to justify a preconceived idea—resistance to Indian army. The syllogism is as follows:

All imperialist aggression should be resisted.

This is an imperialist aggression.

It must be resisted (whether the masses realise the need of resistance, whether they have any illusions, etc.—this of course is no concern of V).

### *Why 'Resist Indian Army' Was a Wrong Slogan*

The slogan of resistance to Indian army has been raised by a number of comrades besides V. It must be characterised as wrong and harmful in the circumstances, in fact as a slogan which would have helped the Nehru government to smash us all the more quickly. One does not know whether these comrades consider the slogan 'resist the



Indian army'— as a slogan of propaganda or action—we can take it as both.

What does the call 'resist Indian army' amount to? A slogan of popular uprising against the Nehru government. We may ask these comrades—if it is so easy to organise a popular uprising against the Nehru government in backward Hyderabad (notwithstanding Telangana, Hyderabad as a whole is backward; taking 'resist' as a slogan of action) or if it is so easy to use popular uprising against Nehru government as a rallying slogan (propaganda slogan), and if all that is required is a call from the party, why did we not do it in Bengal where as a party we are much stronger? Or in Andhra or anywhere else? In Bengal the horrible deeds of the police in Kamlapur, or the shootings in strikes, or arrests of party leaders—which were acts of direct repression at the hands of the Congress ministry—in Hyderabad the Nehru government till then at least had not repressed anybody, barring of course the fact that the Madras ministry had handed over some of our comrades to the nizam's police—coupled with our relatively greater party strength and influence over mass organisations—could be a far greater urge for uprising than the future doings of the Nehru government. Why then have we not given the slogan of overthrow the Roy government—why did V and others criticise those who give the slogan 'Nehru a goonda'? It seems that the situation was very ripe for an uprising in Hyderabad just because the army had marched in. But it was very premature where the army was permanently stationed and the police were perpetrating daily atrocities. All this only means that slogans of revolutionary struggle are to be determined not by the stage of the intensity of class struggle, but by the moods of certain leaders.

The only place where the slogan of resistance to the Indian union army was correct was Telangana

It would certainly be opportunist and a betrayal of the struggle not to fight on in Telangana. Here the slogan of resistance to the Indian army is a real slogan whose neces-

sity is perceived by the masses. And this has been proved by actual experience.

There could be no two opinions about the fact that we want to bring the masses quickly to that position at which they can echo back our demand—'overthrow the Nehru government'—in the entire Indian union, including Hyderabad.

That is the central point of our activity. The question is: is the situation ripe today that we can raise the slogan at least as a rallying, a unifying slogan all over India, like the slogan: 'overthrow the imperialist rule'—in the earlier years of the national movement? In the 1930s when we raised the slogan 'overthrow imperialist rule', whether amongst our masses or Congress masses, or even hostile masses—it struck a sympathetic chord, served to bring us nearer to the people, to unify the people—for it expressed their desire to be free; because the government was completely isolated from the people. Even those who differed from us, who preached nonviolence or dominion status, had either to support it or keep silent about it. Today however vast sections including sections of our own working class and kisan followers have yet to see the necessity of overthrowing the rule of Nehru and the slogan does not automatically create that sense of unity in common struggle as it did. Exposure, more smashing of illusions, is still necessary till the slogan becomes an all-India rallying slogan.

That does not mean that today we do not raise it locally, in struggles, etc. when the masses can understand it. On the other hand it is incumbent on us to raise the slogan in our struggle, during repression, etc., when we find that the masses will really welcome it as the expression of their indignation. It has to be raised under these conditions. It is thus alone that it will go into the consciousness of the masses all over India—as the direct experience of the struggle—and become an all-India slogan, firstly rallying slogan and then a slogan of action.

We may ask the Andhra comrades how is it that the Andhra people who knew what terror Nehru government's Congress ministry was capable of, who had seen torture, beatings, rape etc.—how is it that these people could not rise in revolt against the Nehru government as the Telangana peasants did? How is it that in defence of themselves we could not start a revolutionary uprising, guerilla warfare, armed resistance to the Congress ministry? The Andhra PC correctly stated the following in its "Raids and Party's Tasks" when it replied to the demand for guerilla warfare in Andhra—guerilla warfare which is nothing but armed revolt, though not yet on a national scale:

"Conditions here are not favourable for forming guerilla squads as in Telangana and carrying on armed struggle. In Telangana the condition of the people is very wretched and three-fourths of the people are coming forward and fighting. The nizam's government is completely isolated from the people. But conditions here are different. The conditions of the people here is not so wretched, and the government has not become completely isolated from the people like the nizam government—a strong section of the people is standing behind the government. In these conditions an armed struggle will still further isolate our party from the people and lead to its disintegration."

The argument about more wretched conditions in Telangana is of course wrong; the difference between the economic conditions in Telangana and Andhra is not such that one should be in revolutionary ferment and the other should not be. But what the document attempts to say, that the Nehru government has a popular base, that the majority of the people is not yet convinced about the necessity of armed overthrow of the government nor can they be rallied on the slogan of armed struggle to overthrow the government, that the slogan of armed overthrow instead of uniting the people isolates us, is correct. What is being discussed here really is not mere resistance in a skirmish, or mass conflicts, but a war against the government—armed struggle against the government to over-

throw it and the reason given to reject it—the government is not isolated—is correct. Though life has forced the Andhra PC to take the realistic attitude, it does not prevent Nageswara Rao and other comrades of the PC from again taking an unrealistic diametrically opposite view, and demand that guerilla warfare should be started all over in India.

Let it be clearly understood that the slogan of 'resist the Indian army' was a slogan to Hyderabad of armed insurrection against the Nehru government—and let those who advocate it answer that the situation was ripe for giving it in Hyderabad, or in any part of India; a slogan which we are not able to give even in the most advanced areas barring Telangana.

Secondly, how fantastic the slogan is, how puerile and dangerous, how it only helps reaction—can be seen from the fact that the slogan of armed resistance to Nehru army was to be given to those who had failed to organise armed resistance on an all-Hyderabad scale even to the nizam—because they were precisely under Nehru's leadership. The people of Hyderabad who calmly put up with razakar terror with their faith in Nehru, who as the nizam attacks them more believe in and rely more and more on the help and intervention of the Indian union, whom the reformist leadership kept away from antinizam struggle precisely by sowing illusion about Nehru and who were therefore waiting for intervention as if it would give a real blow to the nizam were to be told to resist the same Nehru and his army, whose arrival they have been awaiting all these days. Could political innocence, phrasemongering and playing with slogans go further? Resist Nehru when in his name people were not even resisting the nizam fully.

The act (intervention, march of the army) which was to be the first step in the disillusionment of the masses was considered to be the final step in the disillusionment, convincing them about the necessity to overthrow the government. Such are the estimates of phrasemongers or petty-bourgeois revolutionists.

Such a slogan if it had been given would have completely isolated the Telangana peasant and the party from the masses in Hyderabad and outside and would have enabled the bourgeoisie to identify the party position with that of the nizam, and would not have helped the masses at all to learn from their experience or appreciate the position of the party.

It must be understood as an axiom that in times of quick revolutionary developments especially intermediary slogans are of utmost importance deciding which way the flow of mass movement is directed. Slogans which fail to help the masses learn through their own experience, which do not take into account the immediate direction of the mass movement and do not attempt to guide it in proper channels, slogans which only help the bourgeoisie to cut off the CP from the masses—objectively play an anti-revolutionary role.

With petty-bourgeois revolutionists it always happens that just when the masses are about to open their eyes and begin to see the class enemy in a correct light, just when they are beginning to appreciate the work and activity of the CP, when to all appears the bourgeoisie has scored a success, yet in reality the masses are beginning to see through it—just at this time the petty bourgeois rushes in with his fantastic slogans and makes it difficult for the masses to comprehend the policy of the CP and gives one more opportunity to the bourgeoisie to retrieve the losing battle.

In reality, as we will see, intervention and its aftermath have created new problems for the bourgeoisie and accentuated the crisis. It is at the same time opening the eyes of the masses and disillusioning them—a process which we must accelerate. This intervention has not closed the Hyderabad chapter; on the other hand conditions will become worse for the bourgeoisie and we must have enough patience to see that our enemy is getting into a difficult position and we are getting in a position to hit at him pro-

vided we do not recklessly throw away the masses from us.

If the majority of the people of Hyderabad had no illusions, and we were in possession of them, we of course would have advocated resistance. If we had much more strength than what we have today, we would have adopted another successful tactic to break through the illusions about the bourgeoisie. We would have taken the opportunity of the entry of the Indian army to raise and implement the slogan 'smash the nizam', and in several tracts driven out his officers and taken power on behalf of the people, so that by the time the Indian army reached Hyderabad it would have found power in the districts in the hands of the people. Then a real war of resistance, one which the people would have understood, would have begun. But we had not the organisational strength to raise 'smash the nizam' slogan and destroy all bases of compromise.

The reactionary results flowing from the slogan 'resist the Indian army' could now be seen.

### *Masses Learn Through Experience*

Equally reactionary in result will be the slogans of Nageswara Rao. Firstly, he suggests that general strike, sabotage, etc. should have been organised in the rear of the Indian army—as if to organise these the masses are not required, and as if the masses do it any time on any issue—whether on that issue there are illusions, propaganda, etc. is not to be taken into account. This is making the party and the subjective desires of the leadership the motive force of history and not the masses and their concrete struggles and experience. Which province, including Andhra, can say that it could have organised all the things that Nageswara Rao suggests? Not one.

Today he wants guerilla warfare in all the provinces—our strong bases—as if guerilla warfare can be called at the becking of the party. We have seen that Telangana

itself had not gone deep down in the consciousness of the masses. On the question of intervention there were and still are deep illusions. And yet you are supposed to call a guerilla warfare, perhaps of your own people—throw the vanguard into the battle whether the issue is real or even known to the masses or not—whether they realise the treacherous role of Nehru's intervention or not. Guerilla warfare divorced from the masses in the name of Telangana—a slogan which shows that even the very elementary lesson of leading mass struggle is not learnt. To talk of guerilla struggle apart from the masses, to unlink this struggle from the task of building the people's front, to cry for guerilla warfare without exposure, or desperate struggle to isolate the bourgeoisie, is to act as a typical petty-bourgeois revolutionist who does not take into account concrete circumstances.

Our great concern for the heroic people of Telangana should not blind us to elementary teaching of revolutionary Marxism, to the realities of the class situation as they exist.

In this connection we cannot but remember what Stalin writes about the great merit of the Bolshevik Party which knew how to make the masses learn through their own experience, how to make the party slogans the slogans of the masses, how to lead them. The classic instance of the Bolshevik Party's support to the constituent assembly when soviets were in existence is cited by Stalin. To quote ("October Revolution and the Tactics of Russian Communists"):

"The fact is that for the victory of the revolution, if it is really a people's revolution which embraces the masses in their millions, correct party slogans alone are not enough. For the victory of the revolution one more necessary condition is required, namely, that the masses themselves become convinced through their own experience of the correctness of these slogans. Only then do the slogans of the party become the slogans of the masses themselves.

Only then does the revolution really become a people's revolution. One of the peculiar features of the tactics of the bolsheviks in the period of preparation for October was that they correctly determined the paths and turnings which would naturally lead the masses up to the party's slogans to the very threshold of the revolution, so to speak—thus helping them to feel, to test, to realise by their own experience the correctness of these slogans. In other words, one of the peculiar features of the tactics of the bolsheviks is that they do not confuse leadership of the party with leadership of the masses; that they clearly see the difference between the first sort of leadership and the second sort of leadership; that they, therefore, represent the science, not only of party leadership, but of leadership of the vast masses of the working people.

"A graphic example of the manifestation of this feature of bolshevik tactics was provided by the experience of convening and dispersing the constituent assembly.

"It is well known that the bolsheviks advanced the slogan of a soviet republic as early as April 1917. It is well known that the constituent assembly was a bourgeois parliament, fundamentally opposed to the principles of a soviet republic. How could it happen that the bolsheviks, who were aiming for a republic of soviets, at the same time demanded that the provisional government immediately convene the constituent assembly? How could it happen that the bolsheviks not only took part in the elections, but themselves convened the constituent assembly? How could it happen that a month before the insurrection, in the transition from the old to the new, the bolsheviks considered a temporary combination of a republic of soviets with the constituent assembly possible?

"This 'happened' because:

"(1) The idea of a constituent assembly was one of the most popular ideas among the broad masses of the population;

"(2) The slogan of the immediate convocation of the



constituent assembly helped to expose the counter-revolutionary nature of the provisional government;

"(3) In order to discredit the idea of a constituent assembly in the eyes of the masses, it was necessary to lead the masses to the walls of the constituent assembly with their demands for land, for peace, for the power of the soviets, thus bringing them face to face with the real and authentic constituent assembly;

"(4) Only this could help the masses to become convinced through their own experience of the counter-revolutionary nature of the constituent assembly and of the necessity of dispersing it;

"(5) All this naturally presupposed the possibility of a temporary combination of the soviet republic with the constituent assembly, as one of the means of eliminating the latter;

"(6) Such a combination, if brought about *on the condition* that all power were transferred to the soviets, could only signify the subordination of the constituent assembly to the soviets, its conversion into an appendage of the soviets, its painless extinction.

"It need hardly be proved that had the bolsheviks not adopted such a policy the dispersion of the constituent assembly would not have taken place so smoothly, and the subsequent actions of the socialist-revolutionaries and mensheviks under the slogan 'All power to the constituent assembly' would not have failed so signally."

It is typical of the petty bourgeoisie to forget all class realities and oscillate between complete defeatism on the one hand and highsounding phrases devoid of all realities—i.e. in both cases complete blindness to the class situation. If a strike is broken or there is a short spell of industrial calm—they imagine a period of retreat has begun; if people resist with arms and fight as they did in Telangana they imagine that it means that a call for armed insurrection can be given tomorrow as a slogan of action. When the call does not materialise they lose all

faith in resistance and call for all abandonment of resistance as B does in connection with Telangana.

B's stand now is—bury your arms in Telangana, do not fight; centre has let us down because sufficient supply of arms is not given, etc.

It is no doubt true that Telangana is in danger and it has to bear the brunt. That it is more or less isolated. Yet we must fight to the last. Because by not resisting you are not only not going to save anything, but completely demoralise the people. Whether you resist or not, repression is going to be brutal. Prolonged and protracted resistance, if possible, however might even retrieve the situation if we keep it prolonged for a time. For B fails to see that the situation in Hyderabad has become extremely critical for the bourgeoisie. Within a couple of months all the illusions must begin to burst one after another, the economic situation, atrocious procurement plan, the restoration of the old regime—all this must lead to fresh unrest. The situation is unstable, the bourgeoisie cannot easily control it. If we keep resistance in Telangana, it really gets the chance of expanding and spreading. This is the real picture. Keep the resistance in Telangana, and similarly plan to bring the rest of the masses in line—through all kinds of actions including partial struggles, thus build a popular movement, a people's democratic front. This is the task and not laying down of arms.

One of the Andhra comrades has suggested that our slogan for Hyderabad should be rejoining of the different linguistic areas of the state to their provinces. Even when virtually it is said that the slogan is to be realised as part of people's democracy, in the present context it plays a reactionary role. Firstly, in so far as the slogan is suggested as a slogan of immediate practical action it is nothing but a paraphrase of the bourgeois version of bringing the state administration to the level of provincial administration and has no revolutionary merit in it. It only satisfies the rich peasant and whets his appetite for procuring

land. Secondly, it effectively sidetracks attention from a united fight against the Indian union administration, from the fight for democracy, from the fight against compromise it is hatching, through the constituent assembly, elections, etc. It gives a free charter to the union administration. Those who think that joining the territories to the provinces automatically eliminates feudalism are wrong. The feudal structure, the economic foundations, will remain and yet the territories may become part of the linguistic provinces—even if the nizam is formally under such a scheme, the compromise structure remains. All that happens is that the bourgeoisie is put in exclusive possession of the state by the communists. For communists to fight for such a thing is antirevolutionary.

## XII. PRESENT SITUATION IN HYDERABAD AND OUR TASKS

With the intervention of the Indian army in Hyderabad and the military occupation of the state, the crisis in Hyderabad has become accentuated, opening the possibilities of a rapid mobilisation of the people against the feudal regime and its bourgeois sponsors and protectors.

One of the main factors in the radicalisation of the situation is the beginning of the process of disillusionment with the bourgeois leaders of the Indian union and the leaders of the State Congress, who because of the illusions of the masses about them have up till now successfully sabotaged all struggle in the nizam's dominion in the interest of a treacherous compromise.

These illusions made the Hyderabad masses look to the India government and its army for help, for deliverance from the nizam's yoke and razakar atrocities. They took the initiative out of the hands of the masses and transferred it to the bourgeoisie.

All the expectations of the masses were thus keyed up on the eve of the intervention and they expected that after the triumph of Indian arms the old order would go, the economic problems would be solved and political demo-

crazy for the people established. The greater the illusions, the stronger was the expectation.

### *After Entry of Indian Army*

But within two months of the triumph of Indian arms the masses are witnessing a quite different picture extremely shocking to their hitherto credulous minds. The nizam remained, the feudal order is being wooed, the nawabs and jagirdars are installed in political power in collaboration with extremely reactionary capitalist elements, the tyrannical bureaucrats are restored to their former position, the hated police and magistracy has come back backed by the arms of the Indian union. Even the State Congress which wields considerable influence with the people and which has been a subservient tool of the Indian union government in its fake oppositional role and sabotage of the mass struggle, is kept out of ministry, and only extreme right elements who consistently betrayed all struggle and even accepted ministerial posts in the nizam's cabinet when the nizam was at war with the people—are considered safe to shoulder the responsibility of power.

While the old rulers are restored to their former status, their economic privileges also are being restored. In part of Telangana land seized by the peasants is being given back to the landlords, in the rest of the state the jagirdars and landlords continue as before, the land problem remains unsolved and the tiller is left without land, prices of food-grains have started soaring, the government is on its way to introduce the hated procurement—that open robbery of the peasants—which was one of the main causes of the outburst two years back.

With the rapid deterioration of the economic situation all over India, the situation in Hyderabad had already become unbearable for the masses. If during the last two years there was no general and complete bustup, it was largely due to the sabotaging influence of the Indian union

leaders and the illusion of the masses about it. After the intervention this last big prop of the old order is being seriously undermined through the experience of the masses themselves, and can be completely undermined if the proletariat knows how to lead the masses in a situation in which while the masses are losing confidence in the bourgeoisie, yet the task of consistently organising this disillusionment and tearing them away from the bourgeoisie has to be systematically carried out. Wrong slogans and estimates would just enable the bourgeoisie to take the masses back under its influence.

### *Breakup of Feudal Order*

The present situation in Hyderabad is a continuation and further accentuation of the crisis in Hyderabad which in the first sweep of the mass movement under our leadership yielded the great and heroic story of Telangana. Telangana—the armed struggle of the peasantry led by the Communist Party for land, for power, against feudal autocracy—reaching the stage of embryonic state form and holding out for months defiantly against feudal bandits and armed power typified not only the desperate situation in Hyderabad but the new revolutionary period, with the peasant ever ready to throw himself in endless battle, if the proletarian party is able to reach him, despite his illusions, and lead him. Once his desperation, arising out of his unbearable economic conditions, could find proper outlet under proletarian leadership—there was no limit to the height which the struggle could reach. It could quickly pass from the elementary phase to the highest phase. Telangana was thus the sign of the new period—the symbol of the postwar revolutionary India. It showed to what great heights the masses could easily rise once the proletariat was able to take the lead, do away with bourgeois influence, etc.

It is in this sense that the second party congress correctly glorified Telangana and responsible party leaders raised

the cry of 'Telangana way, Telangana everywhere'. It however did not mean that the insurrectionary situation has become immediately ripe all over India, that it was at our beck and call—a mistake committed by many comrades.

### *Roots of Reformist Mistakes in Telangana*

But Telangana was a victim of the reformist policies of the party also. In the first phase because of the old reformist line, the revolutionary significance of Telangana was not understood and consequently revolutionary line was not pursued inside Telangana itself. The August resolution which led the party to go in for this militant action and in one sweep enabled it to organise armed resistance of the peasants to the feudal order was watered down. With the Mountbatten resolution it became increasingly difficult for any revolutionary line or tactic to be adopted. The result was that not only inside Telangana class-collaborationist mistakes appeared but outside also there was hardly any revolutionary propaganda to popularise the glorious struggle of the Telangana peasants. The attitude in general was that of towards militant partial struggle and nothing more. In fact it can be said and proved that the party, whether in Andhra or elsewhere, hardly got any time to systematically understand and propagate the revolutionary content of Telangana struggle. By the time the second party congress correctly placed the significance of Telangana as indicating a new period of armed conflict and heralding the stage of people's democratic revolution, the attack on the party had already started and the propaganda and carrying Telangana into the consciousness of the masses had somewhat slowed down.

The mistakes committed in Telangana were in line with the old reformist line of the central committee and for which only the central committee could be held responsible and no one else. As R points out in his draft document "On the Present Situation in Hyderabad State and Our Tasks":

"Coming to our guerilla areas, for a long time our main programme was fighting the state forces and razakars. We did not realise the importance of implementing our agrarian programme through the mobilisation of the agrarian labour and the poor peasantry. Consequently the masses became sympathetic spectators, we their volunteers for their protection against the state forces and the razakars. No class organisation of agricultural labourers and sectional organisation for women. No party organisation, no cells and no enrolment of party members. Only organisations functioning were guerilla squads...

"This was realised late and our PC made a serious effort to reorganise completely. Decisions are taken for the implementation of our agrarian programme seriously, i.e. land distribution and wage question of agricultural labourers, functioning of Andhra Mahasabha and organising of agricultural labour and women's committees, local defence squads mainly consisting of youth etc...

"We succeeded to some extent in implementing the above decisions, but before we could implement fully the armies of the Indian union entered the state and upset all our programme."

And again,

"Our party is second to the Congress in mass influence taking the state as a whole and commands the confidence of the overwhelming majority of the masses in the two districts of Nalgonda and Warangal. But the drawback of our movement is, just before the entry of the Indian troops, it was confined to the two abovementioned districts, and some pockets in other districts of Telangana and Marathwada. Our party units got virtually liquidated and our masses became inactive in rural areas where we did not carry on armed struggle. In towns too our workingclass base got disrupted and the Muslim workers fell a prey to razakar propaganda and some of them even joined razakars; trade unions and party units in virtual liquidation. This is mainly because of our wrong understanding

that nothing but guerilla struggle by big squads is possible under those conditions and nonunderstanding of the importance of the rallying of the masses on mass issues for militant actions and organising sabotage activities by small groups of 2 or 3, etc. It is true that we are right in taking to guerilla warfare in our strong areas, but it is wrong to have left the other areas to their fate, without any mass activity or any form of resistance."

*Reformist Line of Old CC—Tailism  
to Congress Leaders*

As regards failure to rouse the anti-imperialist masses in India over the question of Telangana, the document of the Andhra PC "Telangana Struggle and Its Lessons" states the following:

"In Andhradesh, our agitation and propaganda was confined to expose the nizam's atrocities, to enlist Andhra people's sympathies, to severely criticise the Congress government's antistruggle attitude, etc. We could lead the momentum among the people to a higher stage through mass actions. We never returned back the blow delivered on us by Congress government. We always looked towards the struggle of Telangana as a struggle to build up another such revolutionary movement in Andhra. It is why Andhra masses remained as painful onlookers when repression swooped on them or praised them when they heroically fought back the repression. They did not realise the necessity of direct participation in the struggle.

"When our enemies—British imperialism, nawabs of the nizam and the Indian bourgeoisie—all united and helped one another in smashing the revolutionary struggle, we could not realise the necessity of uniting the peoples of Telangana and Andhradesh to fight back the enemy. If in Andhra, people are not able to face the severe repression let loose on them today, it is only due to our neglect—not to move the people in mass against Congress government on Telangana issue."



And again,

"All our propaganda could only make the people as witnesses. They shed tears at the news of Telangana people's difficulties... But we could not create such consciousness in them when they will take it as their own struggle. We always thought in terms of help for the Telangana struggle but we never thought of linking up this struggle with the anti-imperialist struggle in Andhra and take both of them forward. We did not care to take out a demonstration when Congress leaders sought to betray the struggle by a standstill agreement... Due to Telangana struggle, a great upsurge swept over the people of the border villages in the Indian union. Our influence has grown in Andhra public. But we did not take our flag to new areas. We did not make use of such a problem as this which can be very well used as a powerful weapon to unite and mobilise all varieties of people."

### *Conciliatory Attitude Towards Rich Peasant*

As regards class-collaborationist mistakes of the worst type directly following from the old reformist line of the central committee and mechanical copying of the tactics adopted by the Chinese Communist Party, the following is enough to demonstrate how deep the mistakes had crept into the struggle:

"Our tailist attitude towards Congress led to our neglect of land problem. We invited those of the zamindari class into the struggle, who were taking shelter under Congress with a view to safeguard their properties and lands, on three conditions: (1) resign your posts, (2) all bribes to be returned, (3) all illegally-occupied lands should be returned. We said that 500 acres should be left for those who participate in the struggle and only the rest to be distributed. We even allowed some concessions to those who own 200 acres and less—that lands illegally occupied by these should be taken back only with their consent. With all these concessions, our antizamindari struggle was

nothing but a farce. We took to land distribution programme only when the nizam, Congress and deshmukhs under Congress garb intensified their offensive on us."

There was also a marked deviation of faith in the rich peasant who in many places had secured the leadership of the struggle only to betray it:

"We mixed up rich peasants with people and posed their reactions as people's reactions and thus tailed behind rich peasantry, instead of correctly estimating their role, exposing them, rescuing people from their hold and lead the people in the revolutionary struggle under party leadership.

"Where the rich peasant leaders hold the reins, the party organisers were given shelter. But, on the other side, they surrendered to the police along with the people. We too did not try to keep direct contact with the masses and satisfied ourselves saying: 'This much (shelter) they are doing. We cannot expect more than this from them.' Organisers were deceived by this plot of the rich peasants and blindly argued that the people are not coming forward and so there prevail no circumstances in which we can go to the villages."

Thus it will be seen that both as regards the internal strength of Telangana and also its linking with the struggle of the masses outside Telangana as well as in the Indian union, reformism of the old line came in the way of organising the full force of the struggle and exposing the illusions and class enemies of the peasants.

In spite of all these the continuance of Telangana and the fight forged by the peasantry and the fact that this fight was not crushed continually remains as a new beaconlight calling the people of Hyderabad and the masses of the Indian union towards the democratic revolution. The existence of Telangana in spite of its mistakes was an open announcement of the fact that the feudal order in Hyderabad had already reached a breaking point, that the armed masses, peasants, would successfully resist it and that what was preventing Hyderabad from being engulfed in a

united single revolutionary wave was lack of similar developments in the state elsewhere because of the backwardness and illusions of the masses.

### *Imperialism, the Nizam and the Congress Government*

The negotiations between the Indian union government and the nizam were conducted in the background of this revolutionary struggle of the peasants, of which both were afraid, and in the context of a rapidly-worsening economic situation. Both tried to frighten each other with the threat of communism and peasant revolution to secure strong bargaining points against each other.

The conflict between the national bourgeoisie and the feudal nizam was taking place in a situation which was dangerous to both. And therefore both sides were determined to see that whatever their differences might be the initiative should not pass into the hands of the revolutionary masses and the Communist Party, i.e., their conflict should not unleash the pentup mass forces which were ready to meet the challenge of both once they were roused. The nizam aided by Monckton and Churchill tried to secure virtual independence for himself so that he together with the British capitalists could have a free run over the vast territory of Hyderabad. The labour-imperialist Attlee and his agent Mountbatten of course would have been pleased with the nizam's victory. In fact they would have been glad if the nizam had been able to secure the concession that he wanted from the Indian union. At the same time they took precautions to see that the Indian union leaders remain linked with them. They trusted them lest the situation might get out of hand, either by a clash with the nizam and the Indian union, bringing the masses to the forefront or the Indian union referring the dispute in sheer desperation to the UNO in which case British imperialists were afraid that America would get a hand in the game. The Indian union leaders from their side finding the mess that they were in Kashmir took every

precaution to see that every step they took was sanctioned by Mountbatten, a sanction which naturally dictated that no radical social steps should be taken in connection with the nizam's role. There was the conflict not only between the nizam and the Indian union but also the Indian union and British imperialism. But all the three sides were determined to see that the masses nowhere came in the picture. These negotiations once more confirmed the brilliant formulation of the party thesis which stated that in all conflicts between imperialism and the Indian union government the masses will never be appealed to and the problem will be settled at governmental level. Here of course the masses were completely bypassed and though it appeared that the problem was not settled through negotiations and bargaining at governmental level, in actual reality it has been settled like that. For the use of arms against the nizam was only made to ensure the compromise already sanctioned by imperialism and nothing else.

#### *'Armed Clash—Instrument of Compromise*

We do find that in actual life the formulation that the conflict between imperialism and the Indian bourgeoisie will be settled at governmental level sometimes confirmed, sometimes slightly amended. For instance, in relation to Kashmir the conflict between British imperialism and the Indian bourgeoisie is no doubt fought within the framework of compromise, but through an Indo-Pakistan clash. At the same time its another feature is that neither in India nor in Pakistan the masses are really appealed to.

In connection with Hyderabad we find again the use of arms against the feudal ally of imperialism but nonetheless within the framework of a compromise previously arrived at between imperialism and the Indian bourgeoisie and the masses were nowhere called in.

In pursuance of their tactics to keep the masses out of the picture, the nizam and his advisers, though they talk-

ed about resistance to the Indian army, did not offer any resistance nor had they any plans of offering resistance. They and their imperialist masters knew that if any such resistance is offered and the struggle became somewhat protracted the impatient masses in Hyderabad state would rise in action, smash the state power, removing all chances of compromise and in fact challenging even the Indian bourgeoisie. The battle therefore had to be fought on the basis of attempts to enact widespread communal riots in the Indian union so that the attention of the masses can be sidetracked and at the same time anarchy and chaos could be created in the rear of the Indian army. The bankrupt weapon of communal riots is the only weapon which imperialism and the feudal autocrat could hope to wield against the impatient masses in the Indian union as well as Hyderabad; to incite the masses to communal murders, the razakar goondas were allowed to pillage, rape, burn and perpetrate every kind of atrocity hoping that thereby the Hindu masses in the Indian union would take retaliatory action.

### *Strategy of Keeping Masses out of the Fight*

The democratic instincts of the masses in the Indian union inflicted a defeat on the nizam and his advisers. And no riots took place.

The Indian union leaders really believed that there would be riots and were quaking in their shoes when the army invaded Hyderabad. But they were much more afraid of the political initiative of the masses, of the masses rising in revolt against the nizam on the entry of the Indian union army, of the masses in the Indian union and Hyderabad following the path of Telangana peasants and getting out of their hands. From the beginning through its agents, the State Congress leaders, they sabotaged the antinizam struggle of the people of Hyderabad, making them look to the Indian union and its army for help. Side by side they tried their best to malign and slander the Communist

Party and the struggle of Telangana peasants circulating libellous slanders about communist-razakar alliance to alienate the people from all sympathy to Telangana struggle and to isolate the vanguard from the Hyderabad people. The methods and tactics adopted by the rival parties and classes clearly demonstrated the potentialities of mass struggle and how both the classes stood in terror of the mass upsurge.

The reason why there could be no widespread mass upsurge in the last year and following the entry of the Indian union army, the reason why the antinizam struggle of the people of Hyderabad could be so successfully sabotaged lay in the fact that the people of Hyderabad had developed dangerous illusions about the national bourgeois leaders, illusions which are common to all politically backward areas. The second reason why the tactics of the nizam and the Indian union government to keep the masses out of the picture temporarily succeeded was because the mass basis of the party of the working class was extremely weak except in the two districts of Telangana, so that the proletariat could not undertake in the last year or so independent mass actions on a large scale in Hyderabad that would have not only strengthened the peasants of Telangana but would have helped in smashing the illusions held by the masses about the national leaders.

The basic weakness of the proletariat was the fact that it had hardly any organisational and political influence outside the two districts of Telangana. And therefore was not in a position to develop militant actions to seize the initiative in the conflict between the two sections of the oppressing classes. The fact the working class was hardly in a position to make even the beginnings of a sufficiently powerful democratic front, the fact that the working class had hardly started winning over the majority of the people for any antinizam action was of decisive importance in ensuring the success for the tactics of the bourgeoisie. The working class will not be able to march a step ahead in defeating the compromising policy of the national leaders

so long as it does not improve its mass influence and its position among the people. To substitute revolutionary slogans for a patient fight to build mass influence and develop the leadership of the masses will only enable the class enemy to inflict still further defeats on the working class and its party.

### *Not a Stable Bourgeois Victory*

It is further sheer defeatism to think that the national bourgeoisie has secured a stable victory in Hyderabad and that it would be able to stabilise the situation easily. No doubt the illusions about the national bourgeoisie will not disappear all in a day but the fact that the masses were taught to expect a big social upheaval on the arrival of the Indian troops, that their expectations were keyed up, that now for the first time they will see the national bourgeoisie in action in real life and see the contrast between what they imagined the bourgeoisie to be and what it really is, is a fact which accelerates the process of releasing the Hyderabad masses from the influence of the bourgeoisie provided the working class plays its role correctly. Secondly, with its compromising policy, with its framework of compromise determined in consultation with imperialism, the Indian union government and its representatives will not be able to solve a single problem affecting the economic life of the people of Hyderabad. On the other hand they will be accentuating the economic crisis and misery of the people and using their armies to support the iniquitous feudal regime.

The problem of land, the problem of abolition of landlordism and jagirdari, the problem posed by the interest of an agrarian revolution, the problem of the state worker and his wage, the question of state bureaucracy, the question of political democracy which is demanded by all —on all these questions the Indian bourgeoisie will be taking a stand which will only accentuate the situation still further and drive the masses to open desperation.

In fact the Indian bourgeoisie will add new exploitation

and new burdens to the old ones in its attempt to consolidate its position at the expense of the masses and improve it relatively in relation to the feudal hierarchy. While the Indian bourgeois leaders are wooing the nawabs and the nizam's Muslim jagirdars, they are at the same time organising a ruthless drive against the lower sections of the Muslims mostly composed of the petty bourgeoisie, workers and peasants, so that the communal basis of the feudal class is liquidated and the feudal class is made completely dependent on the bourgeoisie for its existence. It at the same time serves to hunt down a very important section in the fight against capitalists and feudal lords once they are rescued from the communal influence.

This repression against the lower sections of the Muslims and repression against the mass of peasants to stabilise the landlords, repression against the common man through old bureaucrats in order to maintain the old order, refusal to take any progressive step for the amelioration of the conditions of the masses together with the prospect of Hyderabad being thrown open without restriction to the exploitation of Indian capitalists so that the full effects of inflation, high prices are fully felt by the people—these factors decisively show that far from having stabilised the situation, the bourgeoisie by first raising hopes and then entering into nefarious compromise in the background of a desperate economic situation has thus forged conditions for a widespread mass struggle against its rule. The bourgeoisie is not really winning the battle. On the other hand for the first time it is coming face to face with its dupes, the masses of the people of Hyderabad.

### *Deepening Crisis—Mounting Discontent*

It is in this common action and the possibility of spreading the struggle throughout the state and the possibility of the development of the spontaneous struggles of the masses themselves that the future of the democratic movement in Hyderabad and Telangana lies. No doubt the Indian union army wants to finish off Telangana before



the masses elsewhere begin to move, it wants to isolate the vanguard and crush it out of existence before the masses elsewhere learn and appreciate the glorious struggle waged by the peasants of Telangana and consciously begin to follow that path. The bourgeoisie and its generals hate Telangana like poison and would not spare any means to crush it out of existence. Their safety lies in seeing that the tradition of Telangana is destroyed, that it is erased from the minds of the people, that it no longer stands there as a living symbol of the glorious resistance of the peasants of Hyderabad and they know that other sections are going to move in the near future.

In these circumstances they would welcome nothing more than stoppage of all resistance by the peasants of Telangana so that they could unleash mass terror against the peasants and cause complete collapse of morale. Under the present situation stoppage of resistance under one excuse or another is nothing short of the worst betrayal of the Telangana peasant unless of course the situation is such that the morale has gone down and the peasant is refusing to fight. Retreat will mean beheading the Telangana peasant, but will not save him from repression and terror, from being hauled up for murder, robbery and dacoity. The danger to Telangana is no doubt there but that danger has to be met by stiff resistance and by making big attempts to spread the struggle against the present regime on as many fronts as possible. Any other method of trying to save Telangana will not yield results. Even the mobilisation of the party in the Indian union for the purpose of saving Telangana will today only have a symbolic value, not affect directly the main course of events there. The course of events there will change only if our party and the working class are able to open as many fronts as possible, on day-to-day economic, political and other issues against the present regime and if in the meantime we definitely are able to protract the struggle in Telangana so that we give time to the masses elsewhere to link up the struggle here.

A report from Marathwada correctly sizes up the situation:

"The prices are rising steadily. Rationing is not yet re-introduced. Jowar sold at one and a half seers per rupee for one month. Now it sells at  $3\frac{1}{2}$  seers to a rupee in government-controlled shops. Wheat costs Rs 2 per seer. The office employees face a wagecut and retrenchment. It is also taking place for other sections of the working class. Their organisations are also springing up fast.

"In the countryside after the first wave of hunting down the razakars and seeking vengeance, after the first sense of relief, doubts have begun to creep into the minds of the people in the last few weeks. Criticism and discontent are beginning to be voiced. The peasantry was the worst sufferer under the regime of the razakars. It was the front-rank fighter against them. This peasantry is being disarmed while the old oppressors, the police and revenue officials are returning. This is very disquieting to the peasants. They feel uneasy that they should be disarmed while their old enemies still occupy the government administration.

"The immediate cause which roused the kisans in Hyderabad was the oppressive grain-procurement scheme. That scheme is being reintroduced. It is not known if it is going to be modified. However the kisan is upset at the very thought of its revival. The land revenue which the kisan refused to pay to the nizam last year is going to be collected as dues—the new administration has announced. In addition the State Congress has asked the kisan to pay to the State Congress fund as much as he pays to the government as land revenue. The custom posts, which were burnt and razed to the ground in the hundreds all along the border, are being reestablished. The kisan is furious and does not know how and why these things are happening. He is against old officers being brought back, against levy, against payment of arrears of land revenue, against revival of the custom nakas. He had secured these gains during his struggle and is very much averse that the new

order should so soon deprive him of his gains. In the aftermath of occupation, he has snatched back the lands which Rohilla and Pathan and Arab sowcars and goondas had seized from him in the past years. Now he is impatient to know when the other lands which have passed to other sowcars and parasites will be permitted to be recovered. The State Congress workers give them the hope of the morrow—of the change through the constituent assembly. In some stray cases he has seized lands from other sowcars too. But these are merely portents of what is raging in the minds of the peasantry.”

### *Armed Defence in Telangana*

This is how the crisis deepens—impelling the masses to move forward and making it impossible for the Indian bourgeoisie to stabilise the situation by compromise with the Hyderabad capitalists and feudal landlords.

Only the party of the working class can lead this developing unrest. Only by concentrating attention on which the masses themselves are moving, when they are coming into conflict with the new order, will we be able to set in motion forces which can challenge the very basis of the rule and save and extend Telangana, link them with Telangana. No struggle is too small; no demand is too petty today. The backward masses of Hyderabad, hitherto kept away in large tracts even from elementary economic struggles, will first move in that direction to realise the necessity of higher forms under our leadership. They will show all the variegated forms from economic protests to higher forms and party must develop them consistently.

And through these struggles the masses will gradually see, when led and directed by the party, the treacherous character of the bourgeois leaders and come to the point of demanding their overthrow.

Our task therefore is to put up a militant defence in Telangana, extend and broaden the mass struggles elsewhere, which bring the masses into conflict with the

present regime, expose the role of the Indian union leaders and the State Congress and other parties, popularise Telangana and try to raise a protest movement against the repression there, to bring pressure of the masses to withdraw repression against Telangana, to save this core of armed resistance and defeat the Indian leaders' game to smash it.

Now that the diversion created by razakars on the one hand and by the illusions about the bourgeois leaders on the other—a diversion which split the working class and tore away the Muslim workers who often formed 40 per cent of the workingclass population—is over, now that both sections are coming out of their stupor, they will feel the effects of the economic crisis, rise in the cost of living, low wages—all the more and the workingclass strikes will be breaking out with greater ferocity. The all-India railway strike is maturing fast and the same cause must bring not only the nizam's railway workers on strike, but the entire working class. The party must prepare for this, organise it. The prospect of an all-Hyderabad general strike—starting on an economic issue and developing as the culmination of a number of strikes—is there, and it must be seriously worked for.

### *Extend Mass Struggles Throughout the State*

These struggles of the working class will first unite the Hindu and Muslim workers, unifying the workingclass movement. The disorganisation of the working class is a special and dangerous weakness—it means the vanguard itself is disorganised. They must not be regarded as mere partial struggles but as the preparatory struggle through which the proletariat rapidly links itself with the revolutionary movement led by the party in Telangana and comes forward to discharge its role in the democratic revolutionary struggle. A dogged defence of day-to-day interests should be combined with the development leading to the realisation of the revolutionary perspective.

The methods of conducting these struggles must directly flow from the needs of the struggle, the consciousness of the masses, and the necessity to develop this consciousness so that the working class understands its political tasks and is able to go to higher forms of struggle. It would be wrong to minimise any one of the factors. If the factor of the needs of local struggle is isolated from the general atmosphere of repression etc., and prevailing consciousness alone is taken into consideration, there is every danger of nonresistance to repression, pandering to backward consciousness and failure to politicalise the working class, as well as failure to develop militant resistance and collapse of economic struggle. If on the other hand mere revolutionary perspective is kept before the eyes, how concretely the masses can be brought to see it is not shown, there is danger of the mistakes committed in Andhra being repeated—indefinite strike, the technical means of struggle and forgetting that masses have to be prepared for the struggle, and in fact unlinking the economic struggle from the political struggle.

In developing these struggles special attention should be paid to Muslim workers, and to reforge the unity of the Hindu and Muslim workers. The Hindu and Muslim workers are divided by the exploiting classes, and in their blindness follow the class enemies. The exposure of communal politics, of bourgeois politics, how it deceived the masses to advance the cause of the exploiters, how the exploiters once more join hands to oppress the exploited, must be sharply brought out—the razakars, communal leaders exposed, the feudal Muslim clique exposed, and the bourgeoisie unmasked, the compromise between the Muslim and Hindu exploiters, between the feudal regime and Indian union leaders, unmasked, to teach the masses that Muslim communalism was a weapon of vested interests and the masses were befooled; that the cry of Indian unity and democracy of accession, was a cry for compromise. Thus workingclass unity should be restored.

Similarly in the course of struggles, whether we are directly leading them or not, the party must carry on political propaganda—full people's democracy in Hyderabad, nationalisation of industries, end of autocracy, people's democratic front, workers' and peasants' alliance, Telangana, against repression etc.—so that political unity and political perspectives unify the workers.

The fight for workingclass unity—not only trade-union unity but also political unity—constitutes the basis of people's democratic front and it has to be systematically carried on. There can be no firm people's democratic front unless workingclass unity is there, for there can be no unity among the people unless the vanguard is united to lead the people.

### *Form Organs of Struggle*

In developing the workingclass struggles the form of a broadbased strike committee with conscious efforts to develop rank-and-file workingclass leadership of strikes, of workingclass struggles, is imperative and incumbent on party members. In recent years strike committees are often mere formal organs—an appendage of the big leaders. They neither really function nor lead, nor take decisions in full view of the masses, and thus do not evoke pride as being organs of their own men—with a pride in workingclass leadership. Sometimes they are nothing more than union executives, labelled strike committees, executives elected by a general council meeting—in which the majority of workers do not participate. They thus cease to be treated as something close to the strike and fail to mobilise the militants and active strata which come to life in strikes and become narrow bureaucratic organs either of the trade-union or party cadres, who on such occasions ought to make every endeavour to promote new people. In the strike committees properly organised and functioning as the real leading organs of struggle, with the full participation of their members, who are in direct touch

with the masses, who are sensitive to the moods of the workers, as well as in the peasants' committees, we get, in embryo, the revolutionary form of organ of struggle and future organ of power. It has to be consistently developed so that the revolutionary struggle of the masses develops a revolutionary form of organisation, when the question of organs of power etc. is raised. In the day-to-day struggle these forms of organisation are the only democratic forms which will keep the leaders in touch with the masses and enable the leaders to actively fight every blow of the government with quick rapidity and counterstrike from the workers, and effectively meet all attempts at disorganisation through repression or disruption through any other means.

In the peasant areas we must take up every issue from procurement, rent, collection of arrears of revenue, oppression by officials, disarming of peasants, and lead the struggle forward to the slogan of agrarian revolution, nationalisation of land, land to the tiller, etc. and demands of agricultural workers. Wherever the unity of toiling peasants has been disturbed due to razakars or other villainy of some of the harijan leaders—wherever there is division between Hindu and Muslim toilers, Hindu and harijan toilers—it must be done away with by political exposure of the upper classes—including the Indian union bourgeoisie.

### ***Make Agricultural Workers and Poor Peasants the Main Base***

We must rely mainly on the agricultural workers and poor peasantry—and forge the struggle in a way which enables these two classes to overcome the vacillations of the middle peasant and keep him in alliance, and isolate the rich. While fighting for the unity of peasant toilers we should not commit the mistake of succumbing to the vacillations or selfish interests of the middle peasants and slack down the struggle under the mistaken idea of unity.' On no

account do we consider the rich peasant as an ally. The experience of Telangana also shows that the rich peasant betrays the struggle and is really in the enemy's camp. The existing economic and class relations in India put him in the enemy's camp. Whatever attitude of non-opposition he might have taken in the past in connection with our antilandlord and antinizam struggle, in the new setup he will emerge more and more as the confirmed enemy of the peasant. Even when he appeared to have sided with us in Telangana he was betraying the peasant for his selfish interest and getting into a leading position to betray. Unless his role is exposed he will mislead the peasant. There should be no talk of 'neutralisation' of the rich peasant. The fact that sometimes he may take a vacillating or even sympathetic attitude to certain partial struggles, etc. has nothing to do with his general role in the democratic struggle. In any decisive conflict, even in a partial struggle, he will come forward as an enemy. Whatever be his attitude in any partial struggle against landlords, etc. we will first act according to the needs of the struggle and will not show any consideration to him, to 'neutralise' him. If that partial struggle also includes the struggle of agricultural workers—we will not tone down our demands against the rich peasant to keep him 'neutralised'. We will fight him with the same intensity as we fight the landlord. If the particular partial struggle is only directed against the landlord and not directed against the rich peasant, then we will pocket his sympathy but will not do anything which in any way boosts his sympathy and creates an impression among the masses that he is a general sympathiser of the peasant toiler. On the other hand we will see that the masses do not develop such illusions about him.

To forget the exploiting and class character of the rich peasant is to sacrifice the interests of the most revolutionary class in the rural area—the firm ally of the proletariat—the agricultural worker. The fundamental importance of the development of the struggle of agricultural



worker for wage. etc. must be understood. Without the agricultural worker coming to the forefront of the agrarian struggle through his own struggles, agrarian revolution cannot be successfully organised.

A conscious attempt must be made to link all the struggles with the Telangana peasants whose deeds must become a part of the consciousness of the peasant movement. These struggles again must become the lever of exposing the Indian union leaders, the State Congress, the present regime and taking the peasant to the realisation of the necessity of liquidating the present regime—preparing him for the decisive task of the democratic revolution.

The organisation of separate agricultural workers' organisations, and of kisan sabhas even under conditions of illegality—as well as organs of struggle like peasant committees—is imperative. The role of mass organisation was ignored in Telangana—a fatal blunder which divorces the masses from the vanguard and makes them silent spectators of the struggle. This is an axiomatic truth which is further proved by the experience of Telangana ("Lessons of Telangana"). The source of this deviation is threefold: (1) conditions of illegality, (2) repression and necessity to meet it, and (3) spontaneous outburst of mass struggles.

(1) Under conditions of illegality it becomes increasingly difficult for the party and mass organisations to maintain links with the masses and this is tending to yield to these difficulties—which lead to the party being unlinked from the masses.

(2) The necessity of fighting raids, police attacks, goonda gangs, etc. concentrates the attention, for the very existence of the party, on organisation of bands of volunteers, guerilla bands—who at best are advanced detachments and makes people ignore the basic task of mobilising the people through mass organisations ("Form of Deviation in Telangana").

(3) In a period of rising mass struggle and under conditions of enforced illegality, for some time it appears as

if conscious leaders can be a substitute for mass organisation. But as soon as repression starts, or political difficulties come, the masses are assailed from all sides—then the lack of mass organisations is felt; then it is realised what tied the people together was not so much the conscious leaders but the spontaneous mass discontent.

Any underestimation of the role of mass organisations or organs of struggle like strike committees, peasant committees, will prove fatal. Trade unions, agricultural workers' unions, kisan sabhas, strike committees, peasant committees—all have to be developed and organised despite conditions of illegality. Mass organisations constitute the basis of party's independent influence and weight, the influence of the proletariat.

The party bases itself on the working class and mainly relies on the agricultural workers and poor peasants—with the middle peasant a vacillating ally always to be steadied and also the lower petty bourgeoisie in the same position. Whenever the party has to understand or decide on a slogan, or a course of action, it must first decide by reference to the firm revolutionary ardour of these classes and not of the vacillating sections. It may be that a slogan which rallies these revolutionary sections may not be liked or may even be opposed by the vacillating sections. But if it really sets in motion, educates, the militant majority, then it will serve to break the vacillations of the vacillators and make the alliance firm. While the party does not want the working class to be isolated from the vacillating sections of the petty bourgeoisie who form part of the democratic front, it cannot at the same time make these vacillators the determining factor in deciding the party line and slogans.

The party must lead the struggle of the middleclass employees, students and other oppressed sections of the petty bourgeoisie.

Among the mass of workers, it must carry on direct socialist propaganda—about the aims of the workingclass movement and train workingclass cadres in Marxism.

Among the mass of agricultural workers, poor peasants, socialist propaganda must be carried on. Among the peasant militants from other sections and among petty-bourgeois youths—the party must lead the ideological struggle for socialism, popularise socialism, expose the socialism of the Socialist Party brand. Today among petty-bourgeois youth there is great desire for studying socialist theory, international developments, the Soviet Union, and ideological propaganda to satisfy these needs must be carried on.

### *Slogans of People's Democracy*

Similarly the party must lead the frontal political battle against the existing regime—with arms in Telangana, with weapons of propaganda and disillusionment in other areas—using every form, from illegal handbills to whatever legal opportunity that might exist. With the general slogan of end of autocracy, people's democracy, liquidation of landlordism, nationalisation of land, and land to the tiller—nationalisation of industries etc.—the party must expose the present plans and make our major slogans sink into the consciousness of the people. It must be remembered that over a large part of Hyderabad these slogans have not been heard at all—much less have they even become slogans of fight and action. They must be constantly brought before the masses, who must begin to regard them as their slogans, prepared to fight for them and judge all other parties by their attitude to these slogans.

At the same time it will be a big mistake if the party ignores the bourgeois preparation for the constituent assembly and its elections. The constituent assembly, with its announced adult franchise, will play a big role in the further deception of the masses and hold out new hopes and create new illusions. These hopes and illusions can be smashed only by concretely counteracting every step taken by the bourgeoisie. Firstly, the adult franchise,

which certainly is a big right, hitherto subscribed to by the bourgeoisie in relation to Hyderabad, but nowhere else except in Baroda, has been announced to expose the nizam's opposition as autocratic and to pass off the bourgeoisie as democratic before international opinion. But now it is being realised that adult franchise might prove dangerous even to the bourgeoisie which is afraid of its own shadow—the left wing of the State Congress. That is why there will be mock adult franchise so that the democratic demands of the State Congress followers and other sections of the masses are satisfied, at the same time they are cheated. The disillusionment that is growing after intervention is being stemmed by this appeal to adult franchise, the admission of the right of the representatives to form their own constitution, etc. If this is not concretely exposed, if only a negative attitude of having nothing to do with it is taken, if the class character of the whole manoeuvre is not brought before the people, the bourgeois leaders may get away with it, especially with the help of the lefts who may contest the elections as an oppositional party and canalise the discontent.

We must therefore frame our fundamental demands of the constitution—the rights and principles it should embody—and popularise it as the only constitution that will be acceptable to the people of Hyderabad, and force the other parties to express their opinion on it, expose them especially the wordy left. On the basis of this we should agitate that only those who stand for these demands can remain true to the masses and not those who have compromised with the nizam or the Indian union leaders.

We should frontally attack the manoeuvres and say that the capitalists and the landlords—the Indian union government etc.—all want our votes, get elected through our votes, to oppress us, and parade to the world that the oppression of the peasant, etc. has the consent of the peasant, and show this by their alliance with the reactionary landlords.

Simultaneously we must expose every manoeuvre to violate adult franchise—false registration etc.—to show that they are afraid of the people, want to organise a mock election. We will not allow it. Let there be a real election—supervised by workers' and peasants' committees. We must expose all bureaucratic interference and demand the right for the CPI, lifting of the ban against it to propagate for its democratic principles and fight the elections. Suppression of the CPI—the party of the masses—is disavowing the free character of the elections.

Whether we will really contest the elections will depend, apart from the impossibility of getting such opportunity, on whether the elections become really a rallying point for the masses and a good weapon in our hand to expose the enemy classes and carry the battle to the CA. We must propagate in such a way that any curtailment of the right of adult franchise, which is most likely, will create fresh anger and disillusionment and expose the real game behind the elections.

It is of course obvious that for us this struggle over constituent assembly, though vital and important, is not an alternative to the development of mass struggle, nor a substitute. That will be sheer opportunism.

### *People's Democratic Front*

It is out of the experience, organisation and consciousness developed through these economic and political struggles, that the working class gradually builds the people's democratic front—the front of all the oppressed and toilers, to take up the challenge of the existing regime. The building of the people's democratic front is the concrete task—a task which represents the task of winning over the majority of the people for revolution. The proletariat cannot discharge its tasks of the present period unless it convinces the toilers about the necessity of liquidating the present order, and builds a force which is capable of doing it—the united force of the people led by the prole-

tariat: the people's democratic front. The hegemony of the proletariat is secured by the fact that it is the proletariat which guides other sections to realise the necessity of the front, creates confidence about it, chalks out its programme and patiently directs one section after another to take its position inside it.

The front is built progressively in the course of the struggle, under the conscious direction of the proletariat. Its embryonic and transitional forms are often to be found in the temporary joint committees of several mass organisations for economic help to one section, for joint economic or political action, committees for certain political objectives ending in peasant committees for the programme of the people's democratic revolution. All these are not even like stages but generally the development often goes like this.

The proletariat and its party, therefore, play a decisive and leading role in organising the people through the people's democratic front. It is therefore necessary to overcome all the weaknesses of the party, its small strength, its lack of proper functioning in Telangana, absence of strong base among the industrial workers, absence of workers in leading positions in the party. A wide drive for recruitment in the party especially among the working class and quick training of workingclass cadres and promotion to leading positions is absolutely essential if the party is to discharge its tasks. Recruitment drive and training must also be carried on specially among agricultural workers and poor peasants.

The independent activity of the party, its activity to build a firm base for the proletariat, is the supreme need of the hour if the working class is to defeat the conspiracy of the bourgeoisie and rescue the masses, to be able to develop independent actions to counteract the bourgeois manoeuvres. The basic weakness of the working class hitherto has been that while under its leadership the peasants of Telangana developed revolutionary resist-

ance, elsewhere it had hardly any strength to take the masses into independent action and enable the masses to break through the illusions about the bourgeoisie.

*Expose the Treacherous Policies  
of State Congress Leaders*

At the same time it is clear that the events following intervention have not automatically disillusioned the masses. Only the process has started and preconditions for rapid disillusionment have been created. But nothing is automatic. If the working class and its party fail to judge each situation correctly, learn to counteract the changing manoeuvres of the bourgeoisie which goes on changing its slogan to suit the change of moods of the masses, there is every danger of the proletariat failing to mobilise the masses and handing them over to the bourgeoisie. At such a critical time failure to advance the slogan and course of action corresponding to the realities of the class situation becomes a great crime. The task therefore is no doubt a difficult one, one requiring careful and vigilant planning and Marxist objectivity.

It is equally true that intervention has not suddenly increased the strength of the party and it cannot fulfil with ease the enormous tasks facing it, from leading elementary struggles to the armed defence of Telangana. The smallness of the party, the lack of cadres, the difficulty of reaching the people—all these will continue. But at the same time it is true that if we correctly organise and lead the unrest, make conscious endeavour to develop leaders from the workers and peasants—the struggles will yield such a good harvest of leaders that what appears to be impossible at present will not appear to be so. Bureaucratic methods of functioning, failure to promote young worker and peasant cadres to leadership will of course perpetuate the famine of cadres, making it impossible for the party to look in certain areas beyond a few elementary struggles. It will not be amiss to suggest that the Andhra

PC should send quite a number of its own cadres to Telangana districts—to organise and extend the struggles, create and train new cadres.

The fact that illusions about Indian union leaders and the bourgeois leaders in general still persist has its bearing on the workingclass approach to other political organisations, their leaders and their followers.

The most important organisation is the State Congress—the direct handmaid of the Indian union leaders, but also cold-shouldered because of the strong influence of the left wing in its leadership. The State Congress has considerable influence with the people, especially the petty bourgeoisie. It is organisation No 1 in Hyderabad—though it has hardly any base among the real toilers. Today, in spite of its being a faithful underling of the Indian union leaders, it is suspected, not allowed to form an interim cabinet, because it is supposed to be full of left elements whom Sardar Patel detests and whom perhaps British imperialism and nizam also hate.

The left elements who are supposed to be strong in the State Congress are however of the usual left variety—a bourgeois left—whose talk is socialist, who vomit anti-communist slander and who are preparing to emerge as the constitutional opposition under the new regime, and are opposed to independent mass struggles.

However both the State Congress and the left were forced to talk of a radical programme because of the resistance of the masses and to sidetrack their attention from the betrayal involved in the present compromise. The recent resolution of the State Congress talks of nationalisation of industry, abolition of zamindari, etc.—a sure sign that the discontent in its ranks has begun to well up.

It is therefore necessary that in organising daily struggles, political battles, in forging the movement to build a democratic front, in the agitation for Telangana and for ending autocracy, for a democratic constitution, we must make constant appeals to the followers of the State Congress and the left to forge a united front with us in fight-



ing the compromise and autocracy. Simultaneously we must expose the vacillating, compromising and treacherous policies of (Swami Ramananda) Tirtha, in terms suited to the consciousness of his followers; we must also expose the left leaders whose deeds and words show a bigger gap. Since the left leaders occupy a stronger position because the general trend of mass mood is towards the left, there might be greater illusions about them especially among the youth. In attacking the left we should not appear to be more opposed to the left than to the right. We might make a differentiated approach to the left to expose the leaders all the more effectively. We should also expose Sardar Patel's support to the treacherous liberals who had deserted even the mock struggle—not to support Tirtha but to expose Patel all the more effectively.

Through constant appeals for joining action and concrete exposure of the leaders we must endeavour to swing the petty-bourgeois following of the Congress into action, against autocracy, against compromise, against economic oppression, political repression, for support to the economic struggles of the masses. Exposure of the bourgeois leaders is not an aim in itself. It is done with a view to release the masses from the influence of the bourgeoisie and the test of its success is how far we have been able to move the masses into united action despite the bourgeois leaders. The winning over of these sections of the masses is an important task in the building of the democratic front and persistent struggle must be carried on for forging a united front with them and bringing them inside the people's democratic front.

### *Sharp Exposure of Socialist Leadership*

There is yet another party of which we must take serious note because of its all-India importance—the Socialist Party—affiliated to the All-India Socialist Party. Though the party is not strong, it is likely to have much importance in the coming days since the left of the State

Congress is likely to join it. In any case because of its all-India importance the party may attract in the near future good elements and create disruption. The disruptive role of this party in Hyderabad struggle—slandering of communists, Telangana, joining hands with the bourgeoisie—must be unmasked. The role it is playing in India—supporting government repression against communists, agreeing to antistrike measures like industrial truce, and talking about strikes before the workers when forced by the discontent of the workers (railway), while encouraging repression against workers and trade unions by blaming the communists for it, the workers for it, rejection of all revolutionary forms of struggle, constitutional opposition etc. Their socialism should be unmasked before the young intellectuals as a variety of bourgeois deception—persistent propaganda for bourgeois democracy, faith in peaceful transfer of power, opposition to government but loyalty to the state slogan. Further a sharp exposure must be made of their estimate of the world situation, their proimperialist politics and they must be unmasked as the enemies of socialism and the toiling people for their anti-sovietism, their hatred of the land where socialism has triumphed. Their akinness to the Labour Party and French socialist-imperialists—tools of American imperialism and their own imperialism.

In this connection it must be considered to be the primary duty of all members of the party to counteract anti-Soviet propaganda, to denounce the war preparations of imperialist powers and unmask the policy of the Anglo-American bloc and the Indian union government. The party must further consistently propagate among all sections but especially among the workers, agricultural workers and poor peasants—the liberating role of the Soviet, the socialist character of the state and the real content of people's democracy obtaining there, so that the anti-Soviet warmongers are met with a strong mass base to defeat their propaganda.

The party must at the same time unmask the disruptive role of the Socialist Party in the trade-union movement in Hyderabad as well as the Indian union. It should expose before the workers that such tactics only help the capitalists—and that is what the socialists are doing. The exposure must be accompanied by strong appeal to working-class unity to fight bosses and secure economic advance. The workers under the influence of the socialists must be appealed to in the name of class unity and solidarity, in the name of common struggle.

The party must also sharply unmask the socialist slogan of linguistic areas rejoining the provinces and expose its real character before the people. That slogan is only a bourgeois slogan to secure dominant right of exploitation—and at the same time keep the feudal exploitation intact. Andhra districts have seen as much repression as Telangana and the common man is as much oppressed here as there. This slogan, basing itself on the sentiment for unification especially in Andhra, is intended to sidetrack attention from the main struggle against autocracy. It is a mere paraphrase of Sardar Patel's slogan of bringing the state to the administrative level of provinces. The working class stands for a unification of the torn linguistic regions by revolutionary means, by overthrowing autocracy and the bourgeoisie in both areas, and by establishing the power of the people. Today if the demand is at all to appear on our platform it must appear in the form of a revolutionary unification by establishing people's power and should not be put in a way so as to obscure the need for the unity of toilers of different nationalities in presentday Hyderabad. This point is important because it seems that in the past this wrong outlook, which underestimated the need of toilers of different nationalities in Hyderabad, was responsible for the virtually nonexistent efforts to spread the message of Telangana to other parts.

In unmasking the Socialist Party leadership on all these issues care must be taken to distinguish between the lead-

ers and honest followers and the latter must always be appealed to for joining action or front. Also the mistake of ignoring the Socialist Party because of its present weak numerical strength should not be committed. The party represents an ideology which in the near future is likely to deceive a number of petty-bourgeois elements getting disillusioned with the bourgeoisie, which deceives honest elements wanting to fight for socialism and therefore the policy of the party must be exposed.

These are the tasks facing our units in Hyderabad. It is important that the PB member from Andhra should call the Hyderabad units and explain the situation to them, ask them to implement the line. In consonance with these tasks he should also help the Hyderabad committee to concretely apply the line to different parts of Hyderabad —Marathwada etc.

Party units outside must do their best to popularise the cause of Hyderabad people and the glorious struggle of Telangana and mobilise popular opinion against the brutalities of the Indian army. An illegal pamphlet describing these brutalities must be got ready to be printed in all languages and to go to workers and peasants first.

## V

# On People's Democracy

## I

Questions have been raised by comrades about the stage of revolution in India. Are we in the stage of February revolution in Russia or are we on the eve of October? And what is people's democracy?

The stage of revolution at any given time in any given country is determined by the maturity of class relations in that country—understood in the context of the class relations in the world, in the context of the crumbling of the capitalist order, and the dominant class antagonism of our times, the bourgeoisie versus the proletariat. The dominant class antagonism in the world puts the socialist revolution on the order of the day. What intermediate stage is necessary to pass on to the socialist revolution—whether it is necessary at all—is determined by the sum total of class relations in the country.

Marxism-Leninism has always regarded the democratic revolution in colonial and less-developed countries as a link in the chain—as a more or less short stage leading to proletarian revolution. This was so because in the period of declining capitalism, capitalism could not play of progressive role and carry out consistently the task of the democratic revolution, the emancipation of the colonies from imperialist yoke, much less solve the major problem of the capitalist world. Only opportunists imagined that

Document adopted by the December 1948 PB meeting, printed as an authoritative statement of the editorial board in the January 1949 issue of *Communist*.

a long period of capitalist rule and development must necessarily ensue as the result of the emancipation of the colonies.

The proletariat, on the other hand, had taken up a position to carry on the anti-imperialist struggle to the final phase of democratic revolution, the transitional point to the dictatorship of the proletariat—the democratic dictatorship of workers and peasants. Imperialism was to be overthrown not to put the bourgeoisie in power, but to exclude it from power; the masses were to take power—democratic dictatorship of workers and peasants—and a corresponding economic programme was to be realised, a programme which would place the key economic resources in the hands of the workers and peasants, and one from which a transition could be made, according to circumstances, to the next stage.

## II

Basing itself on the great experience of the Russian revolution and the Leninist teachings on Russian revolution of 1905-1917—the sixth congress of the Communist International in its colonial theses outlined the communist strategy and tactics in colonial countries as follows:

“As in all colonies and semicolonies, so also in China and India the development of productive forces and the socialisation of labour stands at a comparatively low level. This circumstance, together with the fact of foreign domination and also the presence of powerful relics of feudalism and precapitalist relations, determines the character of the immediate stage of the revolution in these countries. In the revolutionary movement of these countries, we have to deal with the *bourgeois-democratic revolution*, i.e. of the stage signifying preparing of the prerequisites for proletarian dictatorship and socialist revolution. Corresponding to this, the following kinds of tasks can be pointed out, which may be considered as general basic tasks of the bourgeois-democratic revolution in the colonies and semicolonies:

“(a) A shifting in the relationship of forces in favour of the proletariat: emancipation of the country from the yoke of imperialism (nationalisation of foreign concessions, railways, banks, etc.) and the establishment of the national unity of the country where this has not yet been attained: overthrow of the

power of the exploiting classes at the back of which imperialism stands: organisation of soviets of workers and peasants: establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry: consolidation of the hegemony of the proletariat.

“(b) The carrying through of the agrarian revolution: emancipation of the peasants from all precapitalist and colonial conditions of exploitation and bondage: nationalisation of the land: radical measures for alleviating the position of the peasantry with the object of establishing the closest possible economic and political union between the town and village.

“(c) In correspondence with the further development of industry, transport, etc., and with the accompanying growth of the proletariat, the widespread development of trade-union organisations of the working class, strengthening of the communist party and its conquest of a firm leading position among the toiling masses: the achievement of the eight-hour day.

“(d) Establishment of equal rights for nationalities and of sex equality (equal rights for women): separation of the church from the state and the abolition of caste distinctions: political education and raising of the general cultural level of the masses in town and country, etc.

“How far the bourgeois-democratic revolution will be able in practice to realise all its basic tasks, and how far it will be the case that part of these tasks will be carried into effect only by the socialist revolution, will depend on the course of the revolutionary movement of the workers and peasants and its successes or defeats in the struggles against the imperialists, feudal lords and the bourgeoisie. In particular, the emancipation of the colony from the imperialist yoke is facilitated by the development of the socialist revolution in the capitalist world, and can only be completely guaranteed by the victory of the proletariat in the leading capitalist countries. The transition of the revolution to a socialist phase demands the presence of certain minimum prerequisites as, for example, a certain definite level of development in the country of industry, of trade-union organisations of the proletariat and of a strong communist party. The most important is precisely the development of a strong communist party with a big mass influence, which would be in

*the highest degree a slow and difficult process were it not accelerated by the bourgeois-democratic revolution which already grows and develops as a result of the objective conditions in these countries."*

The programme of the Communist International, under the section "Struggle for the World Dictatorship of the Proletariat and Colonial Revolution", laid down the following:

"The special conditions of the revolutionary struggle prevailing in colonial and semicolonial countries, the inevitably long period of struggle required for the democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry and for the transformation of this dictatorship into the dictatorship of the proletariat, and finally, the decisive importance of the national aspects of the struggle impose upon the communist parties of these countries a number of special tasks, which are preparatory stages to the general tasks of the dictatorship of the proletariat. The Communist International considers the following to be the most important of these special tasks:

"(1) To overthrow the rule of foreign imperialism, of the feudal rulers and of the landlord bureaucracy.

"(2) To establish the dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry on a soviet basis.

"(3) Complete national independence and national unification.

"(4) Annulment of state debts.

"(5) Nationalisation of largescale enterprises (industrial, transport, banking and others) owned by the imperialists.

"(6) The confiscation of landlord, church and monastery lands. The nationalisation of all the land.

"(7) Introduction of the 8-hour day.

"(8) The organisation of revolutionary workers' and peasants' armies.

"In the colonies and semicolonies where the proletariat is the leader of, and commands hegemony in, the struggle, the consistent bourgeois-democratic revolution will grow into proletarian revolution—in proportion as the struggle develops and becomes



more intense (sabotage by the bourgeoisie, confiscation of the enterprises belonging to the sabotaging section of the bourgeoisie, which inevitably extends to the nationalisation of the whole of largescale industry). In the colonies where there is no proletariat, the overthrow of the domination of the imperialists implies the establishment of the rule of people's (peasant) soviets, the confiscation and transfer to the state of foreign enterprises and lands."

It is thus clear that colonial or national-democratic revolutions were intermediary steps to proletarian revolution—which was already maturing on a world scale. How soon and how quickly the one passed into the other, depended on a number of factors, including the international situation and the preparedness and maturity of the proletariat in the country to lead the masses—the maturity and strength of the communist party to act as the vanguard.

### III

The passing over of the democratic revolution into the socialist revolution is a Leninist conception. It was propounded by Lenin in his *Two Tactics of Social-Democracy*. Its truth was proved in the 1917 revolution when in nine months the proletariat had to pass from the democratic dictatorship of workers and peasants to the dictatorship of the proletariat, to the socialist revolution. Stalin in the *History of the CPSU(B)* writes:

"While advocating the victory of the bourgeois revolution and the achievement of a democratic republic, Lenin had not the least intention of coming to a halt in the democratic stage and confining the scope of the revolutionary movement to the accomplishment of bourgeois-democratic tasks. On the contrary, Lenin maintained that following upon the accomplishment of the democratic tasks, the proletariat and the other exploited masses would have to begin a struggle, this time for the *socialist* revolution. Lenin knew this and regarded it as the duty of social-democrats to do everything to make the bourgeois-democratic revolution *pass into* the socialist revolution. Lenin held that the dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry was necessary not in order to *end* the revolution at the point of

consummation of its victory over tsardom, but in order to *prolong* the state of revolution as much as possible, to destroy the last remnants of counterrevolution, to make the flame of revolution spread to Europe, and, having in the meantime given the proletariat the opportunity of educating itself politically and organising itself into a great army, to begin the direct transition to the socialist revolution.

"Dealing with the scope of the bourgeois revolution and with the character the Marxist party should lend it, Lenin writes:

"The proletariat must carry to completion the democratic revolution, by allying to itself the mass of the peasantry in order to crush by force the resistance of the autocracy and to paralyse the instability of the bourgeoisie. The proletariat must accomplish the socialist revolution, by allying to itself the mass of the semi-proletarian elements of the population in order to crush by force the resistance of the bourgeoisie and to paralyse the instability of the peasantry and the petty bourgeoisie. Such are the tasks of the proletariat, which the new *Iskra*-ists (i.e. mensheviks—Ed.) always present so narrowly in their arguments and resolutions about the scope of the revolution.'

"In order to leave nothing unclear, two months after the appearance of the *Two Tactics* Lenin wrote an article entitled 'Attitude of Social-Democrats to the Peasant Movement', in which he explained:

"From the democratic revolution we shall at once, and just in accordance with the measure of our strength, the strength of the class-conscious and organised proletariat, begin to pass to the socialist revolution. We stand for uninterrupted revolution. We shall not stop half-way.'

"This was a new line in the question of the relation between the bourgeois revolution and the socialist revolution, a new theory of a regrouping of forces around the proletariat, towards the end of the bourgeois revolution, for a direct transition to the socialist revolution—the theory of the bourgeois-democratic revolution *passing into* the socialist revolution.

"This line confuted the tactical position of the west-European social-democratic parties who took it for granted that after the bourgeois revolution the peasant masses, including the poor pea-

sant, would necessarily desert the revolution, as a result of which the bourgeois revolution would be followed by a prolonged *interval*, a long 'lull' lasting fifty or a hundred years, if not longer, during which the proletariat would be 'peacefully' exploited and the bourgeoisie would 'lawfully' enrich itself until the time came round for a new revolution, a socialist revolution.

"This was a new theory which held that the *socialist* revolution would be accomplished not by the proletariat in isolation as against the *whole* bourgeoisie, but by the proletariat as the leading class which would have as *allies* the semiproletarian elements of the population, the 'toiling and exploited millions'.

"According to this theory the hegemony of the proletariat in the bourgeois revolution, the proletariat *being in alliance* with the peasantry, would grow into the hegemony of the proletariat in the socialist revolution, the proletariat now being in alliance with the other labouring and exploited masses, while the democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry would prepare the ground for the socialist dictatorship of the proletariat."

This passing over, this interlinking of the two revolutions, was a sign of the maturity of socialist revolutions—a sign that the world had entered the epoch of socialist revolutions—the countries with advanced capitalism having the socialist revolution immediately on the agenda. It was a sign of the sharpened class conflict of the capitalist world to which all other antagonisms were long subordinated.

#### IV

Today all these contradictions have sharpened to an immense degree. Firstly, as a result of the war, because of the leading role it played in the antifascist war, the power of the great socialist state, the Soviet Union, has increased tremendously. Secondly, a number of countries of eastern Europe have broken away from the capitalist orbit. The power of the socialist world has increased; the strength of the imperialist world has decreased. Thirdly, the liberation of a great part of China from the yoke of the agents of American imperialism has dealt yet another blow to the capitalist order, sharpening the world conflict be-

tween the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. Fourthly, the powerful rise of workingclass movements, the rise of the communist parties in a number of countries and the growing awakening of the people in these countries against the Marshall enslavement and the attempt at stabilisation of the capitalist order, makes this conflict intense and brings it to the point of civil war. The poverty and destitution created by decrepit capitalism, the enslavement being imposed by aggressive American imperialism, the world economic crisis—all these sharply pose the question: capitalism versus socialism. The internal crisis of the imperialist system is still further aggravated and the system is brought near collapse by the rise of colonial struggles which develop into prolonged wars and in which the working class and its party are taking a leading or active role, preventing compromise and carrying forward the revolution. This sharpens the conflict inside the imperialist countries; it further creates the threat inside the colonies of the whole struggle passing into the hands of the proletariat and the threat that with independence the colonies might get altogether out of the capitalist orbit, because of the active role played by the proletariat. The two camps that are formed today, the camp of imperialism and the camp of anti-imperialist forces, more and more stand revealed as the camp of world capitalist order and the camp of world socialist front led by the Soviet Union. The war preparations of the first camp are directed against the Soviet Union and other democratic states and are part of its war against world socialism. The class conflict in the world, in each country, has sharpened so much that the capitalists in their desperation are dreaming of an international war against the forces of socialism, democracy and peace.

It is therefore impermissible to talk about building capitalism, giving a long period of development for capitalism, as certain communist leaders have done. It is a throw back to the discredited social-democratic conception which wanted to erect a Chinese wall between the democratic and socialist revolutions.

It is in the context of this world situation that the developing revolutions in each country, including ours, must be viewed. The new feature that will be found in backward and colonial

countries is that the delayed democratic revolutions are breaking out in the midst of the most intense and sharpened conflict in each country between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, between the bourgeoisie and the toiling masses—proletarian and nonproletarian. This heightened conflict in each country, together with the intensified conflict between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat on a world plane, interlaces the two revolutions far more closely, inextricably, and makes it impossible to win the first without passing over to win the second. It is this deep interlacing, the fact that in each country the revolution is taking place in the midst of unprecedented conflict between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, between the former and the nonproletarian masses as well, that underlines the character of the present revolution as people's democratic revolution—which emphasises its extreme nearness to the socialist revolution and, at the same time, sharply demarcates it from the bourgeois-democratic revolution—and people's democracy from bourgeois democracy.

## V

In India we find all these features in our struggle for people's democracy. The delayed democratic revolution is to be pushed forward in the midst of an unprecedented antagonism between the bourgeoisie, on the one hand, and the proletariat and toiling nonproletarians, on the other. On every issue we see the toiling people coming into conflict with the bourgeoisie. This is natural because the bourgeoisie, with capitalism on the point of collapse, is unable to reorganise economic life but only adds capitalist exploitation to the unbearable yoke of feudal exploitation of the peasant. Its land programme, for instance, brings it into conflict not only with the proletariat but with poor and middle peasants as well.

Nothing need be written about the sharpened conflict with the proletariat—the attack on the Communist Party and the strike struggles, the terror against workers, the legislations passed and its wage policy are clear witnesses to the sharpened conflict. By upholding private production, by refusing to nationalise industries and curb profiteering, by its policy of high prices

and inflation, by its failure to tackle blackmarketing—the bourgeoisie comes into conflict with the proletarian as well as non-proletarian masses of town and village. By linking India's fate with the world capitalist order which is on the brink of collapse, by attempting to throw the burdens of the crisis on the people, the bourgeoisie and its government come into conflict with the people.

Whether it is building of industries and more scope for employment, or national planning or prices and monetary policy, there is not one question on which measures of the government can be supported as progressive ones; there is not one question on which the proletariat can do anything except advance measures of the transitional period—measures which can be realised only by a people's democratic government. On every front, in every activity, everything that the bourgeoisie does is reactionary and has to be countered by proletarian measures. Every step forward for the realisation of democratic revolution necessarily takes an anticapitalist character and thus the two stages get interwoven.

The situation is totally unlike any we had witnessed. This is typified in the fact that the immediate aim of the revolution is to dethrone the bourgeoisie from power, to eliminate the political rule of the bourgeoisie. In the earlier period the democratic revolution marched against imperialism and sought to paralyse the instability of the bourgeoisie; now its aim is to deliver the frontal blow against the power of the bourgeoisie itself. Not paralysing the instability, but open defeat, vanquishing, in a political battle, of the bourgeoisie. Such is the immediate political objective of the people's democratic revolution.

This is a totally new feature of the situation. It is missed by those who take an opportunist line by saying that nothing has changed, argue as if it is imperialism that is to be overthrown as in the earlier days and screen the new class relations involved in the necessity to eliminate the rule of the bourgeoisie. This necessity, as it can be easily seen, links the struggle for democratic revolution with the struggle for proletarian revolution which cannot be achieved without overthrowing the rule of the bourgeoisie.

What place does fight against imperialism occupy in the struggle? Here again it is to be carried on at a different level. The bourgeoisie has secured a national state, linked with world capitalism—and therefore a satellite state. The struggle for real independence means taking the country out of the orbit of world capitalist order, into the socialist front, the socialist system. Freedom and independence now mean freedom from the world capitalist order—not from this or that imperialism only. Thus, again, the task of fighting for real freedom is linked with the defeat of capital at home and abroad and breaking away from the capitalist system.

Further the revolution has of course to liquidate feudalism, but as we have seen even this task cannot be done without simultaneously fighting the capitalist elements in the countryside and overthrowing the political rule of the bourgeoisie. Thus both the antifeudal and anticapitalist character of the struggle gets emphasised.

It is this mixing, this combination, that gives us people's democratic revolution in our country.

## VI

Is the present phase of the Indian revolution comparable with the February or the October revolution in Russia? It is neither. It is mixed. In India the interlacing has taken place not exactly in the way it took place in Russia. It is not February—because our aim is not to overthrow autocracy, but the rule of the bourgeoisie. Our aim is not to paralyse the instability of the bourgeoisie, but to overthrow it.

It is not October—because, though we are eliminating the political rule of the bourgeoisie, we are not able to raise the slogan of the dictatorship of the proletariat immediately—because the intermediary strata, parties, classes have not yet exhausted their full possibilities and therefore a bloc with them cannot be ruled out. We have already seen that large sections of the petty-bourgeois masses, middle peasants, etc. are coming into conflict with the bourgeoisie, especially because of its failure to liquidate feudal relations in a revolutionary way—i.e. failure to carry out the democratic revolution—and this force

is a valuable force. To forget that it has not exhausted its possibilities is to outrun its consciousness, to disrupt the democratic front and hand it over to the bourgeoisie. In Russia the bolsheviks could raise the slogan of the dictatorship of the proletariat only after the democratic dictatorship had exhausted its possibilities, the majority of the people had been won over, etc.

Those who argue that we are on the eve of October forget that before October, side by side with the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie, there was the democratic dictatorship of the workers and peasants—a bloc which was rendered inevitable at that time by the petty-bourgeois composition of Russian population.

Only one warning is necessary. No one can say whether in the course of the struggle we will not march straight to the dictatorship of the proletariat. It becomes a question of the strength of the proletariat, its hegemony, its capacity to lead the toilers, how quickly in the process of the struggle the nonproletarian toiling sections shed their illusions, etc. No dogmatic assertion can be made. But for the present we can only work on the strength of the correlation of forces as it exists.

This means that the proletariat must attach great importance to the intermediary strata, to winning them over, to see that they are not split, to defeat every manoeuvre of the bourgeoisie to mislead them, to adopt supple tactics and manoeuvres to enable these masses to shed their illusions by their own experience. To hurl phrases at them, to act on the presumption that they will automatically come, to belittle the concrete task of winning them over, and to concern oneself with repeating fundamental slogans only will put the initiative in the hands of the bourgeoisie or its agents—the socialists, etc.

The people's democratic revolution is thus the democratic revolution which is more than ever interlaced with the socialist revolution in each country and in the world. It begins by throwing the bourgeoisie out of power. So far as we can see, in our country the immediate state form will be a bloc of the proletariat with nonproletarian elements, a democratic dictatorship of the workers and peasants. But this state, arising in the context of world socialist revolution and in the course of direct



struggle against the rule of capital, will quickly pass into the dictatorship of the proletariat. Its programme—nationalisation of land and largescale industries, etc.—itself constitutes a transitional programme.

The state cannot mark time. The bloc must immediately move against the capitalist elements in the countryside and towns and begin a process of squeezing them out. It will be in a position to do it more quickly than in the past because the countries of the socialist system will be in a position to supply it with the technical means to overcome backwardness, reorganise industry and reconstruct economy on socialist lines.

To the extent that the proletariat leads the bloc decisively and makes the state act energetically against the political and economic sabotage of capitalists, the state matures into a dictatorship of the proletariat, the bloc is replaced by a unified leadership of the proletariat, hegemony of the proletariat. The mistake of Tito and others lay in imagining that after people's democracy the class struggle dies down and does not get intensified. The proletariat will have to struggle against the vacillations of its allies to see that the state marches forward, the bourgeoisie is crushed and firm steps are taken towards socialism. This cannot be done unless in the process the proletariat brings all its allies firmly under its leadership—i.e. establishes the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Zhdanov, in his report on the international situation at the Warsaw nine-parties' conference, describes the people's democratic government as a bloc headed by the working class—a bloc of peasants, people, etc., i.e. one in which the bourgeoisie has no place. He says that the bloc has introduced nationalisation, gone beyond bourgeois democracy, etc.—meaning towards socialism.

Kuusinen in his article "Are You For or Against the Soviet Union?" described it as the intermediary stage to socialism. This also is important. The intermediary stage is the stage in which the class struggle is the sharpest, because the issue has yet to be finally decided. The bourgeoisie is thrown out of political power, but not yet economically vanquished, etc.

## VII

People's democracy is thus not qualitatively a new element. It is the delayed democratic revolution ripening into socialist revolution in the midst of sharpened world conflict. It is the consistent application of Leninism to the present situation. It is not a substitute which dispenses with the dictatorship of the proletariat. It is the consistent application of the principle of proletarian hegemony to all the stages of the revolution—based on a sober estimate of the class relations and the situation at any given stage.

It is easy to see which classes will actively participate in it. Just because of the sharpened antagonism between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, between the bourgeoisie and other sections—it is only the proletariat that will lead it consistently. Its firm ally will be the proletarians of rural areas and, next to that, the poor peasant. The middle peasant vacillates, but has to be won over. The petty bourgeoisie vacillates, but the section which is turning more and more towards socialism will be won over; the other sections will vacillate more, and be split. It is the same with the intellectuals. It will be a desperate race, for the bourgeoisie will try to tear away sections from the proletariat and the proletariat will have to wage a virtual war of ideology, actions, etc. to win over the vacillating sections.

The leading combination will be of course the proletariat in alliance with rural proletarians and poor peasantry—the same combination that brings about the proletarian revolution. Once more we see the interlacing, and how quickly one stage ripens into the other depends on the strength of this combination.

## **VI**

# **On the Agrarian Question in India**

### **I**

In view of the fundamental questions raised, the stage has arrived when the Communist Party must make a fresh analysis of the agrarian situation, assess new factors and frame a new strategy of fight and slogans on the basis of a correct estimation of the class relations in the rural areas.

The colonial theses of the sixth congress of the Communist International analysed the situation as follows:

“Inasmuch as the overwhelming mass of the colonial population is connected with land and lives in villages, the plundering character of the forms of exploitation of the peasantry made use of by imperialism and its allies (the class of landowners and trading-usury capital), acquires a specially important significance. Owing to the interference of imperialism (imposition of taxation, import of industrial wares from the metropolis, etc.), the drawing of the village into the sphere of monetary and trading economy is accompanied here by a process of pauperisation of the peasantry, destruction of village handicraft industry, etc., and proceeds at a much more rapid rate than was the case when the same process took place in the leading capitalist countries. On the other hand, the delayed industrial development in the colonies has put sharp limits to the process of proletarianisation. This enormous disproportion between the rapid rate of destruction of the old

Document adopted by the December 1948 PB meeting, printed as an authoritative statement of the editorial board in the January 1949 issue of *Communist*.

forms of economy and the slow development of the new has given rise in China, India, Indonesia, Egypt, etc. to an extraordinary 'pressure on agriculture' and to agrarian immigration, rackrenting and extreme fragmentation of the land cultivated by the peasantry. At the same time the whole burden of the previous feudal or semifeudal conditions of exploitation and bondage, in somewhat 'modernised' but in no way lighter forms, lies as before on the shoulders of the peasantry. Capitalism, which has included the colonial village into its system of taxation and trade apparatus and which has overturned precapitalist relations (for instance, destruction of the village commune), does not thereby liberate the peasants from the yoke of precapitalist forms of bondage and exploitation but only gives the latter a monetary expression (feudal services and rent in kind are partially replaced by money rent, while payment of taxes in kind is replaced by monetary taxes, and so on), which still more increases the sufferings of the peasantry. To the 'assistance' of the peasants in their miserable position comes the usurer robbing them under certain conditions (e.g. in some localities of India and China), even creating a hereditary slavery based on their indebtedness.

"Notwithstanding the great variety of agrarian relationships in different colonial countries, and even in different parts of one and the same country, the poverty-stricken position of the peasant masses is almost everywhere the same. Partly owing to unequal exchange, and partly to direct exploitation, the peasants in these countries are not in a position to raise the technical or organisational level of their economy . . . The ancient systems of artificial irrigation which in these countries is of great importance for agriculture, thanks to the interference of imperialism, first of all fell into decay, and when later they are reestablished on a capitalist basis, then they were found to be too dear for the peasants to make use of . . .

"The pitiful attempts at carrying through agrarian reforms without damaging the colonial regime are intended to facilitate the gradual transformation of semifeudal landownership into capitalist landlordism, and in certain cases to establish a narrow stratum of kulak peasants. In practice this only leads to an ever-increasing pauperisation of the overwhelming majority of the peasants, which again, in its turn, paralyses the development of

the internal market. It is on the basis of this contradictory economic process that the most important social forces of the colonial movement have their development."

This was two decades ago, before the great capitalist crisis, before the second world war and the economic developments preceding it—two decades before the full effects of the growth of Indian industry, despite imperialist obstacles, growth of trade, commerce and towns which led to increased commodity production, production for the market in villages, could be seen; this was two decades before the second world war, which brought every product of the Indian village into the market, transformed them into commodities and subjected the producer to the law of the market, leading to an unheard of differentiation in the villages.

## II

However the Communist Party has not made any fundamental analysis of the peasant problem after that made in the colonial theses of the sixth congress of the Communist International. The party platform and the ruling conceptions of the peasant struggle have mainly been based on this analysis made two decades ago, without taking into consideration the big changes that have come over the Indian village since then.

Not only has no new analysis been made; the colonial theses itself were either understood in a mechanical way or totally ignored. All the wrong reformist notions about a united national front, which were mercilessly criticised at the session of the second congress of the Indian Communist Party, appeared on the peasant front, in the party basing itself on this theory, i.e. on the vacillating classes who by themselves could never be the driving force of either a thoroughgoing agrarian revolution or even a powerful agrarian movement. The Kisan Sabha, for instance, which we have been leading, mainly based itself on the middle peasant and voiced his doubts and vacillations. Without the least desire to underestimate the work done by the Kisan Sabha, as communists we must say that we mainly based ourselves on the vacillating middle peasant, sometimes allowed even the rich-peasant ideology to dominate or influence the Kisan Sabha, neglected the poor peasant and kept the agricultural workers at an arm's length.

The failure to organise the agricultural workers into a separate organisation is not an accidental one. It reflected the capitulation to the rich peasant and middle peasant, the fear of offending them, of disrupting the 'peasant' unity. It was seen in the Kisan Sabha and kisan fraction when the question of redistribution of land was discussed and some comrades demanded 100 acres for the rich peasant, as a matter of principle—once again in the name of peasant unity.

Today also the same capitulating reformist tendency manifests itself under the slogan of 'neutralisation' of the rich peasantry which in reality is another name to avoid open conflict of agrarian workers against the rich peasant—substitutes neutralisation for such conflict and thereby capitulates before him. Again the capitulation manifests itself by defining a rich peasant as a middle peasant and advocating alliance with him in the name of Lenin and Stalin. It unmasks itself in hesitation to organise a separate agricultural workers' organisation or in bypassing the question of the fight for a living wage for the agricultural worker.

This reformist outlook was immensely strengthened in the period of antifascist war when the party committed gross reformist mistakes and was guilty of a nonclass reformist outlook on a number of problems. This was reflected in the antihoarding and anti-blackmarketing campaigns which also were not based on the main exploited strata of the peasantry and in which the help of the upper classes was also sought. The idea of making them nonclass all-people's campaigns was dominant in some of the circulars quoted in the "Report on Reformist Deviation to the Second Congress". Along with this was of course the failure to develop struggles against land relations, etc. which marked the culminating point in the class-collaborationist reformist outlook. This last however was a special feature of the war period. It meant collaboration with feudal elements also—thus taking up a position of which the party has not been guilty now or earlier.

What was the ideological postulate of this reformism, which continues now and which was there before the war itself? It was the formula, the uncritical formula, that the agrarian struggle was only against feudalism in land (a counterpart of the formulation that the national struggle was only against imperialism); it led to a failure to understand the changing class reality in rural areas,

to understand the rapid class differentiation that was taking place in the villages—in ryotwari as well as zamindari areas—and therefore to the advocacy of collaborationist tactics with rich exploiting elements, and to the development of a conception of peasant unity in which the oppressed section, the real driving force, the agricultural workers and poor peasants, was deprived of its leading role.

The fact that the middle peasant suffered from feudal domination in landlord areas; that in ryotwari areas he suffered from the moneylender-landlord; that the rich peasant was critical of the landlord and was not averse to curbing his power, especially if it could be done by others—this was taken as sufficient reason to seek united front with him, on his own terms; in fact to base ourselves precisely on the middle peasant and make the agricultural workers and poor peasants trim their sails to suit his vacillations which opened the door to the infiltration of the movement by rich peasants. The question was not asked: how far are these classes consistently antifeudal, how far will they stand for consistently carrying out of the democratic revolution? Nor was the question asked as to what distinguishes the rich peasants' opposition to landlordism from that of the agricultural proletariat and the poor peasants—that the one was a compromise in his own interest, etc.

The failure to judge each section, its opposition to feudalism, etc. by reference to the position it occupied in the process of production, its links with existing society, the failure to see the antagonism of new classes which was developing within the shell of feudal relations, the failure to see the class differentiation arising out of the development of capitalist relations in agriculture—which would have made it clear who was compromising notwithstanding his critical attitude to feudalism, who was vacillating notwithstanding his sufferings from feudal yoke and his talk about fight, who constituted the driving force because it combined the opposition to the old and new exploitation—was at the bottom of the reformism on the peasant front.

If we had adhered to classical Marxist-Leninist writings these mistakes could not have occurred. For the strategy of class combination in the democratic revolution had been repeatedly stressed in the writings of Lenin and Stalin. For at no stage of the demo-

cratic revolution does Leninism permit us to rely on the middle peasant. The reliance on agrarian proletariat and poor peasantry is incumbent for the proletariat at any stage of the revolution. The different stages may be distinguished by the attitude taken towards the middle peasant, by the classes who are considered to be the main enemy to be fought.

### III

The political thesis of the second party congress contains no fundamental reestimate of the class relations in the agrarian areas. The party congress was busy hammering out a correct political line, rescuing the party from collaboration with the national bourgeoisie and taking a position of opposition and struggle against the bourgeois-national government. It could not reestimate the agrarian situation and had to content itself with giving a general call to struggle. How the party resolution moved within the old framework could be seen from the following:

"The central task on the peasant front is to rouse and . . . as the fighting central organisation of India's peasantry."\*

Notwithstanding the fact that a general call to struggle is given, the bourgeois landlord bills are unmasked, the slogan of land to the tiller is raised and a call is given to organise the agricultural labour into a separate organisation, the analysis remains rooted in the old and fails to take proper account of the changed class relations in agrarian areas. It does not take account of the development of capitalist relations, of the rise of new contradictions, new antagonistic classes as a basic contradiction and fails to develop the strategy of a correct class combination for the day-to-day struggle of the rural toilers as well as for the struggle for people's democracy. Nevertheless the call given therein served to release the peasant front from the fear of struggle, from capitulation before landlords and the agents of the Congress, and unleashed new forces.

The unleashing of these struggles have brought forth all the accumulated problems of the agrarian front. The fact that in the recent struggles in Bihar the agricultural worker played a leading

\* See this volume, pp 97-100.



role, that they centred round him, has raised the question of his separate organisation for his day-to-day battles. This has raised a number of problems, his relations with the poor peasant, and the middle peasant; would a separate organisation lead to an antagonism between the two?

Similar is the experience in the United Provinces—the experience of agricultural workers fighting heroically in the agrarian struggle has posed the same problem. But the comrades of the United Provinces have gone deeper in the analysis, for they have posed the problem of the agricultural worker in his antagonism to the rich peasant. Once again the question of his separate organisation has been raised and of his relations with the poor peasant and the middle peasant.

In both these provinces, the question is raised only from the point of view of organising the day-to-day struggles.

In Andhra, the question has been raised more fundamentally—from the point of view of the main class combination for the present stage of our revolution. The question has been asked: do we seek an alliance with the middle peasant, or do we seek to neutralise him? It is contended that if we are in the period of revolution corresponding to February in Russia, then we must seek alliance with the middle peasant; if we are heading for October then we must neutralise the middle peasant. Here the problem of the class combination in rural areas was raised in a different way—in the guise of protecting the alliance with the middle peasant, etc.—but its basic approach was the same reformist one which would only apply a class analysis to the peasantry and would not uphold the cause of the agrarian workers for fear of breaking the peasant unity.

But the merit of the Andhra comrades was that they tried to correlate the strategy in the peasant areas with the general political strategy of the proletariat for people's democratic revolution; that they sought to deduce the day-to-day tactics from the general political strategy. That they did it wrongly is another matter.

It is therefore inevitable that the party reexamines the agrarian situation and comes forward with a correct strategy based on a correct class analysis of the forces in rural areas. This leads us to go to the facts about the agrarian situation and test how far

things have changed since the sixth congress of the Communist International made its analysis. In passing it should be noted that while the sixth congress theses sharply emphasised that pro-capitalist and feudal forms of exploitation and relations on land continued, yet they also took note of the fact that the situation would not be always so rigid and that changes might take place. They declared:

"The pitiful attempts at carrying through agrarian reforms without damaging the colonial regime are intended to facilitate the gradual conversion of semifeudal landownership into capitalist landlordism and in certain cases to establish a narrow stratum of kulak peasants."

#### IV

What have been the changes in Indian agriculture during the past five years—what has been the accumulated effect of the changes in the last fifty years? How does it alter the picture of Indian agriculture hitherto painted by us?

The first arresting fact is the rise of the landless labourers. Quite a considerable part of these landless labourers are the village serfs or slaves of the hindu village—the untouchables. They are no longer in possession of their plot of land. The rest are expropriated touchable peasants. Both together create the landless labourers. The following statistics are revealing:

THE RISE IN THE NUMBER OF AGRICULTURAL LABOURERS (IN MILLION):\*

1882	1921	1931	1933	1944
<i>Census</i>	<i>Census</i>	<i>Census</i>	<i>ILO estimates</i>	
7.5	21.5	33	35	68

\* These figures are given by the directorate of economics and statistics of the ministry of agriculture, government of India, in its monthly publication, *Agricultural Situation in India*, Vol. III, No 4, July 1948. They are for the whole of the undivided India including the states. The same source gives its own estimate of the population of agricultural labour for 1948, in Indian union and states including Hyderabad, as 33.986 million, which is obviously too low.

Figures given by R. P. Dutt in *India Today* on class differentiation in Madras (per thousand of agricultural population);

	1901	1911	1921	1931
Labourers	345	340	317	429

Figures about Bengal quoted by R. P. Dutt:

	1921	1931
Labourers	1,805,502	2,718,939

According to 1944-45 official figures, 20.6 per cent or 78 lakhs of acres in Bengal were cultivated by agricultural labour.

According to the same source, the strength of respective sections of the peasantry in Bengal was as follows:

Type of peasant	Percentage of total agricultural population	Percentage of cultivated land in their possession
Landless	36.4	1.8
Families dependent on less than one acre of land	17.7	4.2
More than one acre but less than three	22.0	16.9
More than three acres but less than 5 acres	9.6	14.7
More than 5 acres	14.3	62.8

(*Agricultural Statistics, 1944-1945*, p 48.)

Thus in Madras in 1931, 42 per cent of the agricultural population was landless labour. In Bengal in 1944-45, 36 per cent was landless, and together with those who held below one acre—the semiproletarians—they formed 54 per cent, i.e. the absolute majority of the agricultural population.

Figures given by the Andhra provincial committee of the party about Andhra reveal that in one village, out of 447 families, 220 are families of landless labourers. In another, out of 49, 16 are families of landless labourers and 22 are those of poor peasants. In a third village, out of 492 families, 350 are those of agricultural labourers including artisans. The propor-

tion of landless thus is nearly 50 per cent in the first village, 30 per cent in the second and 70 per cent in the third.

A report of a member of the UP committee of the Communist Party contains the following:

"I have here used the word ryot along with agrarian labour. Now this is very important since the agrarian labour numerically is a very very minor section these days.

"The ryot or 'riyaya' means the small artisan, barber, iron-smith, carpenter, sweeper, etc. in the village, including of course the agricultural labourer. They are all landless generally.

"The riyaya is 30 to 45 per cent in the villages. The larger the village the bigger the percentage.

"Taken communitywise the sweepers and chamars make the major portion of the ryot. They are the worst sufferers too.

"Now the agrarian labour is drawn mainly from the chamars. The nonagrarian among them indulge in various trades. And the labour section also has two categories—seasonal and permanent.

"For the whole ryot the question is of wages and land. But the question of land concerns the agricultural labourer alone, and the question of a living wage is also his. For the rest it is an economic question of yearly or terminal remuneration on a fair basis.

"No doubt the remuneration given to them is very poor and inadequate and the sweepers are posing the issue very sharply. But so far we have not fixed any remuneration standards for the different sections of the ryot. At various places the sweepers have struck work under the leadership of Babinki Sabha or some opportunist leaders. The striving for a better deal is intense in the sweepers all round.

"Then comes the agrarian labour mainly employed by the zamindars, rich peasants and an upper section of the middle peasants and, above all, by the farm owners.

"Their wage standards are certainly very poor and differ from locality to locality. Mostly they are paid Rs 15 monthly and an ordinary diet, or maximum two maunds of grain yearly instead of diet. The seasonal ones get ordinarily Re 1 per day.

"So far we have fixed no living wage for them too. This is to be particularly noted that during the recent years there has been a growing shortage of agrarian labour due to the miserable wages and hard work. In the industrial areas the agrarian hands have become industrial workers and in other areas they have become milkmen, etc.

"At many places they have refused to work and agreed only after a petty increase was sanctioned. In many areas they are getting even Rs 30 monthly and food.

"Politically, the chamars (the agricultural labour too) are swinging towards the Dalit Sangh and the sweepers towards the Babinki Sabha, etc. Now all these are communal organisations led by congressmen of their own community. But in places where we have worked they look to us also.

"As soon as we pose before them their demands of wages and land the entire ryot gets up and thinks. They are also easily convinced of a united front with the poor peasants and become ready to join the common organisation of which so far the latter is not convinced.

"Not only that there are deep prejudices among the ryot against all peasants, it is also divided sharply on the basis of caste, but such prejudices wither away as soon as they have to face some common oppression.

"There exists vast discontent in this section and there have been clashes between ryot and zamindars, but our task is to properly and consciously lead this discontented mass and win it over from all sectarian and communal politics and influence."

Here is yet another new factor. The ranks of the rural proletariat are swelled not only by the ancient serf, the pauperised peasant, but also by the dispossessed artisan who has lost his profession. The comrade concerned is somewhat hesitant to lump him with the agricultural worker—and yet it is correct to do so.

Here again, according to the testimony, rural workers from land as well as other means of production number 30 to 45 per cent in villages.

According to the report of the Floud commission the number of landless labourers in Bengal was about 22 per cent of the population. This was nearly a decade ago. The latest official

figures for 1944-45 give the percentage of landless labourers as 36.4.

## V

What is the significance of the rise of the agricultural workers? It announced the fact firstly of capitalist commodity production. It announced the fact that an increasingly large number of rural people can only exist by offering to sell their labour-power—that their labour-power has become a commodity. Notwithstanding the fact that a considerable number of these again find occupation as tenants, or sharecroppers, etc.—the main conclusion emerges that they are sellers of labour-power. They are not only divorced from land but also from other means of production, bullocks, ploughs, etc., so that it is becoming impossible to engage them except as 'hands'.

The development of labour-power into a commodity is a capitalist relation and is in contradiction with feudal relations, feudal land relations; in fact it is the negation of such relations. It is only a sign of the disintegration of feudal economy and the growth of capitalist relations within the womb of feudal society.

The striking feature then of our agrarian relations is that between 30 to 50 per cent of the rural population is involved in capitalist relations and is seller of labour-power. Actually the number is much bigger since together with the poor peasants, who partly hire themselves out and also sell their labour-power, they come to 70 to 80 per cent of the village population—which shows a reversal of old relations and the strength of capitalist relations.

Naturally another conclusion follows from this. These 70 to 80 per cent are also buyers of commodities—means of livelihood, etc.—in the market, and thus once again this overwhelming majority represents the capitalist mode of exchange. Despite the feudal relations obtaining on land, despite the varied forms of feudal bondage that still exist—the overwhelming majority is subjected to the laws of commodity production. It has not escaped feudal exploitation or feudal burdens. The new exploitation has been added to the old one. But the point is that such an overwhelming mass is also subject to capitalist exploitation.

capitalist relations; that the monopoly of feudal exploitation and relations is broken, that these relations are disintegrating and, as a result, new ones have developed.

Describing the rural proletariat Lenin in his *Development of Capitalism in Russia* wrote as follows:

"The other new type is the rural proletariat, *the class of wage-labourers possessing allotments*. This comprises the poor peasants, including the completely landless peasant; but the typical representative of the Russian rural proletariat is the agricultural labourer, the day labourer, the unskilled labourer, the building worker, or worker in other trades, possessing an allotment. The insignificant dimensions of the farm on a small patch of land and, moreover, a farm in a state of ruin (this is particularly evidenced by the letting of land), the inability to exist without selling labour-power, (the 'trades' of the poor peasant), an extremely low standard of living, probably lower than that of the labourer without an allotment, these are the distinguishing features of this type... Very often the rural labourer is allotted land in the interests of the rural employers and for that reason the type of rural labourer with an allotment is a common type in all capitalist countries. This type assumes different forms in different countries: the English cottager (cottage) differs from the parcel land peasant in France or in the Rhine provinces, and the latter differs again from the knecht in Prussia. Each of these bears traces of the special agrarian system, of the special history of agrarian relations in those countries... The legal title to his plot of land does not affect the definition at all. Whether the land belongs to him as his own property (as in the case of the parcel land peasant) or whether the landlord or rittergutsbesitzer allows him the use of the land, or, finally, whether he owns it as a member of the village commune, as in Russia—makes no difference to the case at all. In including the poor peasant in the category of rural proletariat we are not suggesting anything new."

The main criterion for the rural proletariat is that it must be a seller of labour-power. whether it formally owns some plot of land or not.

Writing about the significance of the disintegration of the peasantry and the rise of rural proletariat, Lenin further said:

*"The disintegration of the peasantry creates the home market for capitalism. In the lower group, the formation of the market takes place in regard to articles of consumption (the personal consumption market). The rural proletarian consumes less in comparison with the middle peasant—and, moreover, consumes goods of an inferior quality (potatoes instead of bread, etc.), but he buys more."*

Thus the rural proletarian is a buyer of commodities on the market—he belongs to capitalist society—more than the middle peasant.

His emergence, continued Lenin, gives rise to another class belonging to capitalist society:

*"The rise and development of a rural bourgeoisie creates a market in a twofold manner: first, and principally, in regard to means of production (the productive consumption market), for the well-to-do peasant tries to convert into capital the means of production he 'collects' from the 'impoverished' landlords as well as from the ruined peasant. Secondly, the market for articles of consumption is created by the fact that the requirements of the wealthy peasant have grown."*

In this way the rise of the agrarian proletariat signifies the rise of a capitalist market, the rise of commodity production, the rise of new antagonistic classes, the rise of the peasant bourgeoisie out to hire and exploit labour, run agriculture not as a source of livelihood, nor for satisfaction of personal needs, but for profit, for surplus value.

## VI

The strength of these relations can be seen easily if we take into consideration the strength of the agricultural workers and poor peasants—and the figures about concentration of land.

All these years we had noted the phenomenon of the growing concentration of land in the hands of fewer and fewer people. But from this we did not draw the conclusion of the rise of a new class—antagonistic to or superimposed upon the old one; we saw in it only growing impoverishment, and not the new classes—and were deceived sometimes by the fact that the expropriated peasantry was again employed as feudal tenants,



moneylenders' serfs, etc. We regarded it only as a throwback to feudalism. Today we can understand the same facts in quite a different light.

The evidence about expropriation of peasants, described by imperialist chroniclers as the "passing of the land from the cultivating classes" but which constituted in reality the process of penetration of capital into agriculture—the moneylenders, the usurious capital, and later on the rich tenants and farm capital—has been noted by economists, and our party, long ago. But it was associated only with the growing impoverishment of the masses under imperialist rule and not with the rise of new classes. The concentration of land comes out of this process of expropriation, which expropriates the peasant not only of land but also of means of production—making it more and more difficult for him to return to the status of an ordinary or even a cultivating peasant. The evidence submitted to the Bengal famine commission shows that this process is going on. War conditions have of course accentuated it all the more. The famine commission asked the provincial governments: to what extent was there a tendency for ownership of land to pass out of the hands of cultivating classes to non-cultivating classes (read people with money, or money-lenders, etc.)? Has this tendency been reversed or arrested to any significant extent?

The replies\* were as follows:

**Bengal:** "There is no doubt that there is an increasing tendency for ownership of land to pass out of the hands of the cultivating classes. The transferees may be either nonagriculturists or *agriculturists who have already got more land than they could cultivate directly*. There is no reason to suppose that the tendency has been arrested or reversed; and it may be presumed to have been rendered worse by the Bengal tenancy (amendment) act of 1938, which, by removing restrictions on rights of transfer, has greatly facilitated the passing of lands out of the hands of bonafide cultivators."

**Orissa:** "There are reasons to believe that the right of free-

\* The Bengal Famine Enquiry Commission, Final Report, 1945 (emphasis added).

transferability of land has prejudicially affected the small cultivators. At present there is no noticeable tendency for ownership of land to pass out of the hands of the cultivating classes to noncultivating classes, *but there is a tendency for land to pass from small cultivators to persons who are men of professions as well as cultivators*”—i.e. to rich farmers or to those who though born in the farmer's family have made money in profession and accumulated capital to invest in land.

*Madras:* “An investigation of transfers during the period 1931 to 1934 showed that about 20 per cent of all the areas transferred went to nonagriculturists, while a very large proportion went to big absentee landholders, particularly agricultural moneylenders. This was the result of foreclosure on debts. A definite reply cannot be given whether the tendency has been arrested or not in recent years. The indications are there that the tendency has decreased.”

*Bombay:* “One of the results of agricultural indebtedness is the transfer of land from the cultivating classes to noncultivating classes. The process is however slow and is checked by the Dekkhan agriculturists' relief act, the agriculturists' debtors' relief act and by the introduction of the restricted tenure.” The claim of the Bombay government to have checked the process is a false one. Bombay is one of the worst provinces so far as direct expropriation of peasants is concerned.

*The Central Provinces and Berar:* “There was an increasing tendency for ownership of land to pass out of the hands of cultivating classes but this has been checked by the debt conciliation act, the moneylenders' act, the relief of indebtedness act, etc. There is now a tendency for ownership of land to go back to the agriculturists as a result of good profits made in agriculture. In Berar, most of the lands bought up by cooperative banks have been sold to the agriculturist class.”

The claim of the Berar government is equally false. For by agriculturists it only means rich cotton-growers or landlords. One can easily understand who could buy back the land because of good profits from the cooperative societies, who could have had the money. The fact is that in Berar, nearly 20 to 25 years ago, the small peasants as well as the well-to-do peasants, and following them perhaps even some of the landlords, were

ruined by the falling cotton prices. They were heavily indebted. Large parts of the land were mortgaged to moneylenders—who were considered to be nonagriculturists, and large parts went to the cooperative societies who had advanced big loans. Large areas of land remained uncultivated. The government appointed a debt conciliation board to scale down the debts and laid down that debts up to Rs 25,000 can be scaled down. The clear intention was to include the debts of the landlords and very rich farmers also for scaling down. In the process of conciliation the small peasant was ruined and the rich ones and the landlords got back the land after paying the scaled down debt. The process of conciliation consisted in scaling down the debt to an arbitrary proportion—say to one-third or one-half—and then ask the debtor to pay the sum or in view of the same give away his plot of land. The small peasant had no cash and could not pay even the reduced amount. Only the big ones could pay the reduced amount and get back their land.

*The United Provinces:* "Where transfer of cultivating tenures take place, the transferee generally belongs to the cultivating class, because unless he sublets the land, he himself cultivates it. The United Provinces tenancy act provides for restrictions on subletting and for ejectment as a penalty for subletting in contravention of the act. *The recent working of the tenancy act shows that ejectment of tenants giving subleases in contravention of the act have been rather large.*"

The UP government does not say how far land is passing into the hands of the bigger or richer tenants. The admission however that subletting is increasing may be of importance because subletting is often done by poorer sections to richer sections who require more land for cultivation.

The high prices of the war and postwar period have accentuated the process of strengthening the richer sections at the expense of the poorer ones—whose direct result could only be more and more concentration of land in the hands of the richer sections. The *Report of the Famine Commission* says under the heading "Decrease in Indebtedness between 1942-45":

"In view of the absence of reliable statistics, it is impossible to estimate the extent of the reduction in agricultural indebtedness as a result of high prices for agricultural produce. The replies which

we have received indicate, however, that there has been a substantial reduction in all provinces. *This appears to be particularly true of cultivators with large holdings and a considerable proportion of those possessing medium holdings. The hopeful significance of this fact for the future development of agriculture must not be underestimated merely because the proportion of such classes to the total rural population is not large. It should not be overlooked that the proportion of land held by these classes is large. In so far as the burden of debt has hitherto stood in the way of the improvement and better cultivation of land the outlook for the future may be regarded as reasonably bright in respect of the greater part of the cultivated land of the country*" (emphasis added).

Here is ample testimony to prove that only a small minority of well-to-do and rich farmers, together with a few medium peasants, benefited by the high prices, and that for the rest conditions must have deteriorated. Also ample evidence to show that this small minority holds the major part of the land. The hopeful sign that the commission perceives in this is characteristic of their hope to develop agriculture on a "more production" basis, i.e. on capitalist lines. The members feel that freed from the old debt the rich peasant will now be permanently freed from the tentacles of moneylending parasitic capital and will have capital enough to exploit land and labour.

Though several provincial governments mixed the rich and poor agriculturists and replied to the commission that agricultural indebtedness as a result of high prices has declined, still a number of them could not fail to notice which class has benefited.

Replying to the famine commission's question: "Can you assess to what extent, if any, this (agricultural indebtedness) has been reduced as a result of the rise in prices of agricultural products?"—the provincial governments say the following:

*Bengal*: "Substantial reduction has been possible because a large number of cultivators are now in a better position than before to repay their debts in cash and to secure thereby larger reduction of their debts from the creditors. It is difficult to say to what extent the small cultivators, who form the majority of the agricultural debtors, have reached to the rise in prices, since the crop they get from their lands is not always sufficient for the upkeep

of their families and they have to purchase cloth, salt, kerosene, medicine, etc. which are at abnormal prices."

*Bombay*: "Well-to-do agriculturists are to some extent taking advantage of the facilities for encouraging the savings habit afforded by the post office savings bank cash certificates, national savings certificates and cooperative societies. Others have practically nothing to lay by."

*Orissa*: "Substantial cultivators have been able to effect small savings, out of which they paid something to liquidate their own debt without incurring new ones. The smaller agriculturists owning land up to five acres have not much benefited by high prices, as they have hardly any surplus produce to repay the old loans, and the high prices of consumer goods have imposed an additional strain on this class.

"The well-to-do classes are investing their savings in the purchase of lands and defence savings certificates and other war bonds. There has been a noticeable demand for land among agriculturists in the rural areas."

*The Central Provinces and Berar*: "High prices have resulted in regular payments of instalments of scaled-down debts and in making many debt-free or in redeeming their lands which were mortgaged" (we have seen above the meaning of this). "The rural population knows no other method of saving than the purchase of land, cattle, gold or silver. *All these being high priced, a leaning has been shown to purchase land wherever possible.*"

## VII

All this evidence points to the emergence of a new class, of the rich peasant, that benefits by high prices because it produces a surplus for the market, that hires labour, that buys land and that regards agriculture as a source of profit and not a source of livelihood. This class has forced itself on the attention of the provincial governments. Previously the governments knew only three classes: landlord, tenant or peasant, and the moneylender. The differentiation among the peasants was noticed. The war years have accentuated the process and the new class is now recognised.

This class emerges sometimes from the former moneylending 'landlord' of ryotwari areas who now takes to cultivation by hired

hands instead of letting out the land. It also emerges directly from the cultivator—from the more fortunate better situated section, and is no longer a 'nonagriculturist'. It emerges from the tenant of either the moneylending or the feudal landlord.

This class is the other side of the process which has brought the agricultural proletariat into existence, and is its opposite. The agricultural proletariat is deprived not only of land but of means of production also. In the developing commodity production and market, both land and means of production have to be bought on the market for which investment, capital, money is necessary. Neither the poor peasant nor the agricultural labourer can buy them, for they have no money. The rich peasant with his surplus cash and money is able to buy them on the market, and use them for hiring labour. His mode of production is typically capitalist. He exploits labour, buys labour-power, on the basis of his possession of means of production—land and implements of production.

He does not belong to feudal society but to capitalist society. He arises out of the disintegration of feudal economy in face of developing commodity production and often represents the emancipated tenant of the landlord who is able to get out of the shackles of the feudal landlord by the power of money, the power of exchange relations, over feudal relations.

This is how Lenin described the phenomenon in connection with Russia in his article "The Agrarian Question in Russia":

"We see therefore that the peasants are more and more throwing up social elements which become transformed into private landowners . . . At the end of the nineteenth century, the feudal or serfowning landed property of the nobility still comprised the overwhelmingly greater part of the privately-owned land, but the trend of development is obviously towards the creation of bourgeois landownership. Privately-owned land acquired by inheritance from former royal bodyguards, patrimonies and government officials, etc. is diminishing. Privately-owned land, acquired simply with money, is increasing. The power of land is declining; the power of money is growing. Land is being more and more drawn into the stream of commerce . . ."

Thanks to the power of money, the power of developing commodity production, these well-to-do elements are able to escape medieval yoke and carry on capitalist exploitation.

To quote Lenin:

"Mr Karyshev has to admit that 'natural rent' (i.e. rent, not in money but in kind or labour) as a general rule is *everywhere* higher than money rent, and considerably higher at that, sometimes twice as high; that natural rent is *most widespread among the poorest groups of the peasantry*. The peasants who are at all well-to-do strive to rent land at money rents. 'The tenant takes advantage of every opportunity to pay his rent in money and in this way reduce the cost of hiring other people's land.'

"Hence the whole burden of the serf features of our tenancy system falls upon the poorest peasants. The well-to-do peasants try to escape from the medieval yoke, and they succeed in doing this only to the extent that they possess money. If they have money they can rent land for a money rent at the prevailing market rate. If they have no money then they must go into bondage, pay three times the market price for the land they rent, either in the form of a share of their crop or in labour."

And Lenin adds:

"Since we see, on the one hand, households which have no horses, or have only one horse, renting one dessiatin, and even a part of a dessiatin of land, and, on the other hand, we see households having four or more horses, renting from seven to sixteen dessiatins, it is clear that quantity is being transformed into quality. The first category is compelled to rent land by poverty; the position of those in this category is that of bondage. The 'tenant' under such conditions cannot but become transformed into an object of exploitation by paying rent in labour, winter-hiring, moneyloans, etc. On the other hand, households having from 12 to 16 dessiatins of land and *in addition* renting from seven to sixteen dessiatins obviously do so not because they are poor but because they are rich, not to provide themselves with 'provisions' but to become richer, in order 'to make money'. Thus we have a striking example of how tenant farming is converted into capitalist farming, we see the rise of capitalist enterprise in agriculture, for, as we shall see further on, households like these cannot dispense with hired agricultural labourers."

The rise of the rich peasant is thus a capitalist phenomenon, the rise of capitalist relations in agriculture. The 'emancipation' of this strata from the medieval yoke—the reduction of their relation with feudal lords to a mere contractual relation—symbolises the power of money over land; and their mode of exploitation constitutes the capitalist method, of exploitation of men divorced from means of production. Their emergence heralds a new class struggle in the countryside—superimposed upon the old—and makes it plain more and more that the struggle against feudal landlordism cannot be carried on without simultaneously carrying on the struggle against capitalist exploitation, that the two become inextricably mixed, that the majority of the countryside are now exploited by both landlords and capitalists, directly or indirectly.

## VIII

The strength of capitalist relations is further seen in the figures of transfer of land to the upper section and its concentration in fewer and fewer hands.

The sale and purchase of land—even when it is legally only a transfer of tenancy rights—is itself a witness to the power of money, which now represents capitalist relations. It means that land has become a commodity, and whosoever has money can buy it on the market, notwithstanding the obstacles raised by feudal property in it. It is a sign of the crumbling power of the feudal landed property. Land, as Lenin says, is now drawn into the vortex of the commercial order. So long as feudal private property dominated economic relations, so long as production could be conducted on the basis of natural economy, and exchange of commodities hardly existed, land could never be an object of sale and purchase. Money could not barter in land as in any other commodity.

Secondly, the concentration of land in ryotwari areas and in landlord areas is an expression of class relations and of the fact that the product of land is more and more turned into commodities, that men working on land sell their labour-power, that the phenomenon of producing for oneself, for satisfying one's needs, is coming to an end.



The Bengal famine commission report gives figures about Punjab which show that 2.4 per cent of the owners have holdings over 50 acres and own 38 per cent of the land.

28.8 per cent of the owners hold between 1 and 3 acres and hold 3.2 per cent of the land.

20.2 per cent of the owners have holdings of less than one acre and hold 0.8 per cent of the land.

Thus while 2.4 per cent hold 38 per cent of the land, 49 per cent hold only 4 per cent of the land.

The figures about Bombay show that:

Holdings below 5 acres number 1,130,000, they constitute 49 per cent of the total number of holdings, they occupy only 9.5 per cent of the land.

Holdings between 24 to 100 acres number 220,000, they constitute 10 per cent of the total number of holdings and occupy 34.4 per cent of the land.

Holdings over 100 acres number only 20,000, they constitute 1 per cent of the total number of holdings and occupy 15.6 per cent of the land.

This feature becomes all the more glaring when we take into consideration the total number of acres occupied by each category.

Thus the first category of 1,130,000 holdings occupy 2,540,000 (25 lakh 40 thousand) acres.

The second category of 220,000 holdings occupy 9,230,000 (92 lakh) acres.

And the third category of 20,000 holdings occupy 4,170,000 (41 lakh) acres.

Thus 11 per cent holdings occupy 50 per cent of the land; they together occupy 13,400,000 (1 crore 34 lakh) acres when 49 per cent occupy only 25 lakh acres.

The concentration will be still more sharply understood if one remembers that these statistics do not take into consideration the number of agricultural labourers, who may number anywhere between 40 to 50 per cent.

These figures relate only to holders of land and show concentration of land as among those who hold the land as owners. The polarisation, the land monopoly, would stand out still more sharply if we took into consideration the total agricultural population and included the land labourers in the figure.

Figures quoted earlier show the following about Bengal:

<i>Category of holders</i>	<i>Percentage of holders</i>	<i>Percentage of land in possession for cultivation</i>
Landless	36.4	1.8
Less than one acre	17.7	4.2
Between one and 3 acres	22.0	16.9
More than 3 but less than 5 acres	9.6	14.7
More than 5 acres	14.3	62.8

Thus 54 per cent of the rural population has 6 per cent land for cultivation.

14.3 per cent has 62.8 per cent of the land in its hands.

If we take the first three categories together, we find 76 per cent of the rural population has 23 per cent of the land, while 14 per cent has got 62.8 per cent of the land.

## IX

These figures apart from showing the impoverishment imposed on the peasant mass reveal how the old feudal smallscale agriculture is crumbling, how its place is being taken by new agriculture in which production for the market dominates and new classes come forward.

First, the fact that a very big majority hold only a small part of the land means that they are not able to maintain themselves from the land and that they must hire themselves out partly. They together with the agricultural workers must go to the labour market to work for others.

Secondly, because they have to hire themselves out, it means they have to purchase their means of subsistence on the market; they cannot produce them.

Thirdly, the fact that a small minority owns the land means that it is no longer owning the vast tracts of land for satisfying its own needs, but for selling on the market; that it cannot exploit these lands unless it exploits hired labour. It means a considerable part of the produce of these lands—the majority of the land area—must enter the market as commodities.

Thus in landlord area also, under the very nose of the feudal landlords, people begin to produce for the market, hire labour, and carry on capitalist methods of production.

The concentration of land in landlord and ryotwari areas is determined by the growing concentration of money-capital in the hands of a few; by the growing availability for the few to purchase means of production on the market. The concentration of land is not only concentration of land but also other means of production—bullocks, ploughs, manure, etc. Lenin has explained this as follows in his “Agrarian Question in Russia”:

“As a matter of fact the paradox is explained by the fact that the loss of horses is accompanied by the concentration of land in the hands of the wealthy households who are able to maintain a ‘proper’ proportion between the number of horses employed and the area of land cultivated. The ‘normal’ proportion is not being ‘restored’ (for it never existed in our peasant economy) but is reached only by the peasant bourgeoisie. The ‘abnormality’ is really the fact that the means of production are broken up and divided in small peasant farming: the same amount of land which a million one-horse peasants cultivate with the aid of a million horses is better and more carefully cultivated by the wealthy peasants with the aid of only one-half or three-quarters of a million horses.”

This concentration of land further signifies the disintegration of the old feudal peasantry. It symbolises the collapse of the small-scale production suited to natural economy with its production to satisfy personal wants, with little or no exchange of commodities. This understanding of the process is vital for understanding the position of the middle peasant. To quote Lenin (*Development of Capitalism in Russia*):

“The sum total of all the economic contradictions among the peasantry comprises what we call the disintegration of the peasantry. The peasants themselves very aptly and strikingly characterise this process by the term ‘unpeasantise’. This process signifies the complete destruction of the old, patriarchal peasantry and the creation of new types of rural population . . . No attempt was ever made to study this phenomenon systematically . . . This is due also to the fact that the majority of the writers who write on this question regard the disintegration of the peasantry simply as the rise of property inequality, simply as ‘differentiation’, to use

a favourite term employed by the narodniks in general . . . Undoubtedly the rise of property inequality is the starting point of the whole process, but the process is not confined to 'differentiation'. The old peasantry are not only undergoing a process of 'differentiation', they are being completely destroyed, they are ceasing to exist, they are being squeezed out by absolutely new types of rural population—types which serve as the basis of a society in which commodity production and capitalist production predominate. These types are the rural bourgeoisie (mainly petty bourgeoisie) and the rural proletariat, a class of commodity producers in agriculture and a class of agricultural wage workers . . .

"The disintegration of the peasantry, which, at the expense of the middle 'peasantry', develops the extreme groups, creates two new types of rural population. The common feature of both types—is the commodity, money character of economy. The first new type is the rural bourgeoisie, or wealthy peasantry . . . The other new type is the rural proletariat, the class of wage labourers possessing allotments . . .

"The intermediary link between these post-reform types of the 'peasantry' is the middle peasantry. *Their distinguishing feature is that commodity production is least developed among them* (emphasis added). Only in good years and under particularly favourable conditions is the independent husbandry of this type of peasant sufficient to maintain him and for that reason his position is a very unstable one. In the majority of cases the middle peasant cannot make ends meet without resorting to loans to be repaid by labour, etc., without seeking 'subsidiary' earnings on the side, which partly also consist of selling labour-power, etc. Each time there is a failure of the harvest, masses of the middle peasant are thrown into the ranks of the proletariat. In its social relationships this group oscillates between the higher group, towards which it gravitates and into which only a fortunate minority succeeds in entering, and the lower group, into which the whole process of evolution is forcing it. We have seen that the peasant bourgeoisie not only squeezes out the lower group, but also the middle group of the peasantry. Thus a process which is a specific feature of capitalist economy is going on—the process of 'unpeasantising', the intermediary members are dying out, while the extremes are growing."

This gives us the place occupied by the middle peasant in the development of the new class struggle. He is squeezed by feudal landlords; his economic position when it weakens makes him a helpless prey of landlords where landlordism exists; therefore he is antifeudal. He is squeezed by the peasant bourgeoisie also; therefore in the joint struggle against the feudal landlords and peasant bourgeoisie he can be won over as an ally.

But, at the same time, he vacillates because of his intermediary position, because of his social orientation to the peasant bourgeoisie. He, at the same time, tries to defend his intermediary position as a small selfsufficient proprietor—with little connection with production of commodities—when the whole trend of social development is towards production of commodities; he tries to defend smallscale production when largescale production is developing. Hence he continually vacillates not only in the struggle against the peasant bourgeoisie but also against the feudal landlords. He can be won over by decisive action, but cannot be made the base of antifeudal anticapitalist struggle.

The connection between the middle peasant and the feudal form of bondage, especially labour rent, Lenin stressed (*Development of Capitalism in Russia*) as follows:

"The more the natural selfsufficiency system of economy and the middle peasantry decline, the more effectively is the labour rent squeezed out by capitalism. The wealthy peasants of course cannot serve as the basis for the labour rent system, for it is only extreme poverty that compels the peasant to take the worst-paid form of work and such that is ruinous for his own farm. But neither is the rural proletariat fit for the labour rent system, although for quite another reason; not possessing a farm, or possessing an insignificant plot of land, the rural proletariat is not tied down to it to the same extent as a 'middle' peasant, and consequently it is much easier for him to go away and hire himself on 'free' conditions, i.e. for higher pay and without any bondage."

No separate statistics are available just now to show the disintegration of the middle peasant. But the process is considerable in Bengal. According to the Floud commission the percentage of families owning above 5 acres was 25 per cent in 1940; according

to the 1945 figures of the Bengal government quoted above it was reduced to 14.3 per cent. This precipitous reduction could only have been reached by a mass expropriation of the middle peasant, especially in view of the fact that between 1940 and 1945 prices rose immensely in Bengal, from which only the richer sections benefited; that in 1943 Bengal saw the worst famine leading to wholesale expropriation of peasants.

The development of capitalist relations thus gives us new classes in the agrarian areas and a new class struggle superimposed on the old one against feudal landlordism. It shows that a new class of exploiters has arisen—the rich peasant; that the interests of the majority—the agricultural workers and poor peasants—are decidedly antagonistic to the interests of the feudal landlords as well as the rich peasant; that the middle peasant, though himself a victim of this process, vacillates and is capable of giving the battle only under decisive leadership.

## XI

Having come to this understanding of the new classes in the rural areas, we must at the same time see the tenacity of feudal relations, which, while they are disintegrating, yet continue to exist and oppress the majority of the people. Only the rich peasants are able to emancipate themselves from their tentacles. The development of capitalist relations does not as yet mean that feudalism is dead, that it is finished. If we act on this premise we will be committing the same mistake as that made in the agrarian programme of the Russian Social-Democratic Party, a mistake which was nailed down by Lenin as the result of “an overestimation of the degree of capitalist development in Russian agriculture”.

We must realise that the new class antagonism, the new class relations are superimposed upon the old. The entire toiling peasantry groans under the unbearable conditions created by feudalism, backwardness, etc.—and the rise of new capitalist methods of exploitation has only added to the exploitation without abolishing old burdens.

If this is not realised we will not only miss one of the main sources of oppression, of universal oppression, but also land

ourselves into a different kind of alliance—an alliance to fight only capitalism—an alliance in which the middle peasant may have no place—one which will have to neutralise him.

What are the facts which show that feudal relations are still tenaciously persisting and that they are still strong, despite the development of capitalist relations?

First, over a large part of the territory—the acceded states—the jagirdari, landlord and other systems remain, while commodity production may not have reached there to this extent, nor polarisation of classes and emergence of new classes. At the same time, it is a fact that these classes are emerging, and with the accession of all the states to the Indian union and the opening of them to trade and exchange on an increased scale, the evolution will be in this direction.

Secondly, in the landlord areas of the Indian union the landlords own vast tracts of land as their private land; in addition they hold thousands in feudal bondage on lands which they rent. All kinds of feudal levies, like batai, sharecropping and other forms of excessive rent, continue on the landlord lands. Their extortionate rents and forms of bondage spell ruin and disaster among the peasants—and the developing capitalist relations only enable a tiny section of the rich peasants to emancipate themselves. The rest includes middle peasants, poor peasants and sections of agricultural labourers, and all of them suffer from feudal exploitation also along with capitalist exploitation.

The tenacity of feudal relations arises from the fact that penetration of capital in agriculture and development of commodity production depend on the general development of capitalism, of largescale industry, in the country. India—which in spite of the development of largescale industry like the cotton textile, jute, exploitation of coal and iron mines, of cement industries, and big iron and steel works in two places, has not yet developed the metallurgical industry on a big scale—cannot boast of machine-producing industry, and therefore has not yet broken through its industrial backwardness. Development of capitalist relations could not be therefore fullfledged in agriculture and feudal relationships could not be swept aside. The tenacious roots of feudalism could be uprooted only by a thoroughgoing process. In this connection the failure of Indian industry to

produce agricultural machinery and the consequent failure to apply it to agriculture has played a great role in keeping feudalism alive, continuing agriculture on the basis of primitive implements and therefore open to smallscale production under feudal overlordship. In one sense this was inevitable. For the application of machinery depended upon the growth of a strata with sufficient capital in hand and this strata was only slowly rising till late.

Consequently we find some of the worst forms of feudal bondage still continuing and the fight against the landlord still becoming the rallying cry for the majority of the people in the rural areas. Of course it has become impossible to rally a big section of the majority if simultaneously you do not raise the cry of fighting the capitalist exploitation. But the point is that even those who are exploited directly by the capitalists cannot remain indifferent to feudal exploitation, since it also affects them directly or indirectly by producing and perpetuating conditions of backwardness, low wage or feudal bondage.

The fact that alternative employment in the city is limited because of industrial backwardness compels even sections of agricultural workers, recently dispossessed of land, to seek feudal bondage in the form of sharecropping or tenant with no right, tenant-at-will, tenant with rent in kind, etc. This is much more the case with poor peasants and middle peasants who allow themselves to be exploited by the land monopoly of the landlord. Thus, in spite of proletarianisation, there come into existence various shades of proletarian and semiproletarian elements, some of which work now as wage-labourers, now as feudal tenants, etc. This fact makes the fight against landlordism a common and real fight.

The main point however to understand is that the capitalist relations have developed inside the feudal framework, that they are developing with great speed and that in future they will develop with still greater rapidity. Neither the tenacious resistance offered by feudal relations in India as a whole, nor the uneven development of commodity relations in different parts of the country, can disprove this truth. So far as the uneven development of capitalist relations in agriculture in different parts of the country is concerned, such unevenness is normal



and the penetration of capital in agriculture is always an uneven process. Lenin in his "The Agrarian Question in Russia" says:

"It must be pointed out that the penetration of capital into agriculture is a peculiar process which cannot be properly understood if we confine ourselves to general statistics covering the whole of Russia. Agriculture does not become commercialised suddenly and to an equal degree in all types of economy and in all parts of the country. On the contrary, the market usually subordinates to itself one phase of the complex economy of agriculture in one place and another phase in another; moreover, the remaining phases do not disappear but adapt themselves to the 'main', i.e. to the money, phase."

To conclude, feudalism is not dead despite development of capitalist relations. But the struggle against feudal relations becomes linked with the struggle against the new capitalist exploiters in the countryside. To attempt to carry out the one without the other is to be guilty of class collaboration and disrupt the struggle for agrarian revolution. It gets directly linked with the struggle for land itself—for today the struggle for land is directed against the monopoly in land of the landlords and rich peasants—both in landlord and ryotwari areas. The land-hunger of the people cannot be satisfied without attacking the land-monopoly of the old and new monopolists. The slogan of the agrarian revolution, 'Land to the Tiller', is directed against both.

## XII

What is the policy of the bourgeoisie towards the agrarian problem, towards landlordism? What is behind the landlord bills of the Congress ministries?

To understand this we must first give up the fatuous idea that the bourgeoisie only wants to strengthen and protect feudalism, that it would not attack feudalism even to protect its own interests or advance them. When we say the bourgeoisie compromises with feudalism, or strengthens it, the only Marxist meaning is that from the standpoint of consistent revolutionary policy or action, its actions are compromising, etc. It does not mean however that the bourgeoisie does not seek to compel feudalism to reform to its own advantage. All that we say is that the

bourgeoisie in the period of declining capitalism cannot liquidate feudalism in a revolutionary way, but will save its interests of the declining period by only attacking to curb feudalism to suit its own interests. The process only emancipates the bourgeoisie, clears the way for the development of bourgeois relations to the extent necessary, even absorbs the landlords in the bourgeois framework and makes of them bourgeois landlords, without really liberating the masses or calling forth their initiative. Every class is out to protect its own interests and no class is generous to protect another at the expense of its own interests. This idea which is generally prevalent in our ranks comes from a wrong and mechanical understanding of the colonial character of India—an understanding which, by saying that industries have not developed because of colonial character, practically equates the bourgeoisie with feudal elements, sees no contradiction between them and reduces the content of the alliance to one of complete identity of economic interests. In his "Agrarian Programme of Social-Democracy", Lenin writes:

"Yet there may be two forms of this development. The survivals of serfdom may fall away either as a result of the transformation of the landlord estates or as a result of the abolition of the landlord latifundia, i.e. either by reform or by revolution. Bourgeois development may pursue its course having at its head big landlord economy, which will gradually become more bourgeois and gradually substitute bourgeois methods of exploitation for feudal methods. It may also pursue its course having at its head small peasant economy which, in a revolutionary way, will remove the 'abscess' of feudal latifundia from the social organism. . . . These two paths of objectively possible bourgeois development may be described as the Prussian path and the American path respectively. In the first case, feudal landlordism gradually evolves into bourgeois, junker landlordism, which dooms the peasants to decades of most painful expropriation and bondage, while at the same time a small minority of grossbauern (big peasants) arises. In the second case there is no landlordism, or else it is broken up by the revolution, as a result of which the feudal estates are confiscated and divided into small farms. . . . In the first case the outstanding content of the evolution is the transformation of serfdom into usury and

capitalist exploitation on the land of the feudal lords—the landlords—the junkers. In the second case the main background is the transformation of the patriarchal peasant into a bourgeois farmer.”

Lenin further writes:

“Also Marx in Vol III of *Capital* pointed out that the form of landed property which the nascent capitalist mode of production finds does not suit its requirements. Capitalism creates for itself its own suitable forms of agrarian relationships out of the old forms, out of feudal landed property, small peasants’ commune property, clan property, etc. In that chapter, Marx compares the various methods whereby capital creates forms of landed property suitable for itself. In Germany the reshaping of the medieval forms of landed property proceeded in a reformist way, so to speak. It adapted itself to routine, to tradition, to the feudal estates that were slowly converted into junker estates. . . . In America this reshaping went on in a violent way as regards the slaveowning farms in the southern states.”

Keeping this fact in mind that the bourgeoisie seeks to adapt the feudal structure, bringing such changes into it as will advance its own class interests and the capitalist order that it represents—what exactly is the policy that it seeks to follow in relation to the feudal landlords? That it is compromising, that it does not seek to destroy the feudal elements, is obvious. But what is the special form of its compromise, its pressure against feudal lords, of its efforts to adapt the feudal setup to its needs? In the states, by securing the election principle, by holding the military in the hands of the central government and cashing in upon its influence with the masses, the bourgeoisie has adapted the princes to the republic and secured for itself a dominant voice. The alliance takes the form of a dominant voice to the bourgeoisie in the affairs of the states. Only the masses have secured nothing, no abolition of feudal setup, only double domination.

### XIII

What is its policy with regard to the landlords? How does the crisis of agrarian relations come before the bourgeoisie today?

The bourgeoisie in power first of all sees the crisis as a crisis of deficit food production which is using all its valuable foreign exchange, making it difficult to import machinery and capital goods from abroad which it wants for its industries. Secondly, the shortage of food, high prices, etc. are leading to a dangerous situation—facing the bourgeoisie with hungry masses and endangering its regime. Thirdly, it realises that the rack-renting and exploitation of the landlord disorganises agricultural production, makes it less and less efficient and by impoverishing the people narrows down the market for future industrial goods. Fourthly, by keeping the prices high, deficit production raises wage-costs of industrial workers, and makes it difficult to cut wages. Fifthly, the bourgeoisie sees that smallscale production of the impoverished peasant has become very inefficient, and turns its eyes to the rich farmer with capital who, it hopes, will more and more take charge of production. It also hopes to supply him with some machinery in the near future. Sixthly, it realises that the present rights of landlords constitute an obstacle to the rapid penetration of capital in agriculture, to the seizure of agriculture.

The way in which feudalism is adapted to the needs of the bourgeoisie is determined by these considerations. The landlord legislations of the ministries make the aim quite clear. They are directed to open the way to the rich farmer to produce commodities, to produce in a capitalist way, and seek to remove or curtail or curb the interference from the landlords' proprietary rights in the way of penetration of capital. The landlords are being bought, by paying compensation worth crores—though the bourgeoisie might of course claim that it is not paying the full capitalised value of rent. The oppressive feudal rent is not abolished but 'nationalised', i.e. the bourgeois state seeks to appropriate the huge rent for itself, to advance the interests of its own class, for fixing industrial and agricultural development on capitalist lines. The toiler is not freed from this rent. On the contrary, he is asked to shoulder the burden of compensation, the interest on compensation bonds or the money given in compensation. The beneficiaries of this compensation are the rich farmer and the bourgeoisie. But the entire people have to pay for it.

Whether the present landlord bills are withheld or proceeded with, the bourgeoisie will try to clear the road, an opening, to the rich farmer through some means or another, either through amendment of tenancy act, or court or legal pressure against the landlord, or putting a provision in the act that certain types of tenants will be allowed to buy the land at fair price determined by the government, and one which the landlord cannot refuse, and fixing the price of land, etc.—steps will be taken to put its agrarian programme into practice. If it is implemented, it will mean widespread exploitation of the peasantry, adding fuel to the fire, setting a spark to an explosive situation.

The bourgeois programme bears a strange resemblance to the programme of the tsarist minister, Stolypin, described by Lenin in "Agrarian Programme of Social-Democracy":

"Serfdom may be abolished by the gradual transformation of the landlords' feudal latifundia into junker-bourgeois estates, by transforming the masses of the peasants into landless peasants and knechts, by forcibly keeping the masses down to the pauper standard of living, by the rise of small groups of grossbauern, i.e. rich bourgeois peasants who inevitably spring up under capitalism from among the peasantry. The Black Hundred landlords and Stolypin, their minister, have chosen this very path. They realised that it would be impossible to clear the path for the development of Russia without forcibly breaking up the rusty medieval forms of landownership. And they boldly set out to break these up in the interests of the landlords. They abandoned the sympathy which only recently prevailed among the bureaucracy and the landlords for the semifeudal commune. They evaded all the 'constitutional' laws in order to break up the village communes by force. They gave the kulaks carte blanche to rob the peasant masses, to break up the old system of landownership, to ruin thousands of peasant farmers; they handed over the medieval village to be 'sacked and plundered' by those who had roubles in their purses. They cannot act otherwise if they are to retain their class rule, for they have realised the necessity of adapting themselves to capitalist development and not of fighting against it. And in order to preserve their rule, they can find no other allies against the masses of peasants than the 'commoners', the Razuvayevs and Kolupayevs. They had no

other alternative than to shout to these Kolupayevs 'Enrichissez vous!'—get rich! We shall create opportunities for you to make a hundred roubles for every one you invest, if only you will help us to save the basis of our power under the new conditions! This path of development, if it is to be travelled successfully, calls for wholesale, systematic, unbridled violence against the peasant masses and against the proletariat..."

Thus did a landlord ministry adapt landlordism to the needs of bourgeois development.

In the light of these facts we must study critically the landlord legislation and unmask it. The phrasemongering and negative attitude which contents itself with saying that no change has been brought about, that the bills do not mean any change—which really screens from the masses the new offensive—must be given up and a successful campaign launched to unmask the new measure. It is not enough to say that landlordism is not being abolished; you must expose the new capitalist class which is being helped forward in its exploitation.

#### XIV

This also means that in some respects we must modify our agrarian slogans—add to our main agrarian slogans a basic slogan: *Nationalisation of Land!*

The Communist International had put the slogan of nationalisation of land on the programme of the communist parties of colonies. Its dropping out of our programme was not accidental. It was the same opportunist concession to rich and middle peasant psychology that has been noted earlier. It is obvious that a movement which mainly based itself on the middle peasant and would not offend the rich peasant, would always be afraid to push forward the slogan of nationalisation, afraid of the reactions of the property-holding followers. Therefore only one of the main slogans was kept: *Abolition of Landlordism*—and Land to the Tiller. The fact that we had to add 'Land to the Tiller' was an admission that mere abolition of landlordism might not benefit the toilers, that the fruits might be appropriated by the new class of exploiters.

The slogan of nationalisation, the realisation of nationalisation

of land, is the most consistent carrying out of the bourgeois-democratic revolution. Nationalisation of land should not be confused with socialisation of agriculture, socialised largescale agriculture. Under nationalisation, land is nationalised, and so long as the material foundation for socialised agriculture is not ready, private production, smallscale production, commodity production is carried on. In the course of his earlier writings, Lenin repeatedly stressed that nationalisation of land, by breaking up the feudal estates, by nationalising rent, will remove all feudal obstacles to capitalist development in agriculture.

Today, with a quick passing of the democratic revolution into the socialist revolution, nationalisation of land in the hands of the people's democratic state becomes the revolutionary weapon not only of abolishing feudal property but also of carrying forward the struggle against capitalist elements who continuously arise out of the commodity production in rural areas and who, if left unchecked, would soon monopolise all land—for private property would mean capitalist property. Nationalisation of land thus becomes a weapon of carrying forward the democratic revolution into the next stage—the proletarian socialist revolution—by using it as a weapon to squeeze the capitalist elements until they are eliminated by final victory of socialism. It is the transitional slogan which links the democratic revolution with the next stage of the revolution, enabling the proletariat to strike at the capitalist elements.

The land-hunger of the rural masses, the demand of land to the tiller, is directed against the monopoly of land of the landlords as well as rich peasants. The slogan of nationalisation of land is thus directed against the monopoly of both these classes—against both feudal and bourgeois private property in land. The tasks of the two stages of the revolution thus get interlinked through it. At the same time, nationalisation by itself does not and cannot abolish capitalist relations, private or commodity production. It enables the people's state to bring it under control and gradually squeeze it out.

It will be a common slogan both for the landlord and ryotwari areas—one which we have been lacking all these days. We had hitherto satisfied our conscience by stretching the meaning of the word 'landlords' and applying it to the moneylending

landlords. Actually the ryotwari areas had no slogan of revolutionary transformation all these days.

Will it be a rallying slogan? Will it galvanise the rural masses? It will definitely do so. Why? Because the basic masses of the rural population on which we have to rely are the proletarian and semiproletarian elements—the agricultural workers and poor peasants who have been or are being rapidly expropriated because of private property in land. The same is happening to the middle peasant, though he desperately clings to the illusions of a small property holder and dreams of a better world on the basis of small property.

All these classes, and especially the middle peasant, will certainly be frightened if nationalisation is put in the wrong way; if it is not put correctly and properly and its real antifeudal, antirich-peasant, antimoneylender content is not propagated; if it is not advocated on the basis of the very experience of the masses.

The masses have seen that under present property relations they have been expropriated. But our general denunciation of landlords has prevented them from drawing the proper conclusion. Life itself is proving to them that all private property—whether feudal or bourgeois, whether landlord or smallscale peasant property—leads to expropriation of the peasant—it means property of the exploiting classes. We have attacked only feudal property in land, and thus prevented them from understanding that the only guarantee against feudal and bourgeois expropriation is nationalisation of land.

Only nationalisation of land will break up feudal property, only nationalisation of land will hand over the land to the tiller for use, only nationalisation will end the land monopoly of the landlords and rich peasants, only nationalisation with its prohibition of purchase and sale of land will eliminate the power of money, of rich ones to speculate in land, to appropriate it and to expropriate the peasant, only nationalisation gives a guarantee of security to the peasant and against the power of money, against attachment of land by the moneylender, etc. Thus not only the agricultural workers and poor peasants will rally round it, but even the middle peasant, whose experience tallies with what we are saying, can be made to understand that nationali-



sation, far from threatening him with loss of land, ensures him against expropriation by the richer elements. There is no doubt that initially his vacillation will be very big; incited by the rich peasant, he may be hostile. For he himself has all the prejudices of a property holder against nationalisation. But he can be convinced, especially as he sees the truth with his eyes, especially if we describe to him what is happening to the middle peasant all over the country—statistically, concretely.

Nationalisation of Land—with land to the tiller for use—should be our slogan along with abolition of landlordism, etc.

## XV

Another major demand which must figure in our programme is the demand for a living wage of agricultural workers—which will be a tremendously rallying demand to organise the agricultural workers. This, together with limitation of hours of work, extension of other rights of industrial workers, social insurance, etc. will become the broad platform for organising the agricultural workers in a separate organisation. Of course the platform will include the common demand for nationalisation of land, abolition of landlordism, etc. These at present appear to be the additional demands that will have to be incorporated in our agrarian programme.

Certain questions about organisation—questions regarding a separate organisation of agricultural workers, or rural working class as a whole—have been raised. Some comrades have expressed the fear that such an independent organisation might bring about a conflict with poor and middle peasants, especially if the organisation champions a living wage. These questions can be answered briefly, because the foregoing analysis has already made the position clear. The rural proletarians constitute the biggest single group of the agricultural population in many parts. Divorced from land, he is the nearest ally of the proletariat in carrying through the revolution. He is the closest ally in the democratic as well as the socialist revolution. Proletarian hegemony in the agrarian revolution, in the people's democratic revolution, cannot be established without the rural proletariat taking the lead and initiative in the countryside and

leading the poor peasants—another firm ally—and the middle peasant, a vacillating ally. Proletarian hegemony can only be secured through the leadership of the proletariat. Both for the success of the democratic as well as the socialist revolution, the proletariat must see that the rural workers, firmly allied with poor peasants, take the lead and initiative.

The rural workers cannot be roused to this task unless they are organised as a separate class, unless their day-to-day battles are fought against their exploiters through their separate organisation. Their separate trade organisation or organisations and the battles fought through them will create a common class consciousness, rouse political consciousness and enable them to play their vanguard role in the agrarian revolution. It is therefore incumbent that they should be organised in separate organisations for their day-to-day battles. It is further incumbent that the party makes special efforts to recruit this section inside the party, since they are nearest to the proletariat. Special political work, party work among the rural proletarians, recruiting them inside and making them the base of proletarian party in the countryside is incumbent on every communist. It is the ABC of Leninism. Only thus, i.e. by being drawn inside the party and inspired by the proletariat, the rural worker begins to assume a leading role in the agrarian revolution and the battle for people's democracy in the countryside.

The separate organisation of the rural workers must of course have close links forged by common struggle, mutual help and organisational cooperation with the other sections of the rural masses—the poor peasants and the middle peasants, organised in the Kisan Sabha. The rural workers' organisation may be affiliated to the Kisan Sabha, with proper representation—or, better still, representatives of one organisation should invite the corresponding executives of the other for their important meetings, etc., and there should be joint observance of days and of course joint struggles. But it is incumbent, at the same time, that the trade organisation of rural workers or its federation should be affiliated to the All India Trade Union Congress where its members come into direct touch with the industrial proletariat.

The doubts raised about hostility from certain sections of the

peasantry towards the rural workers' movement should not be rejected off hand. There are special elements in the Indian situation which make such hostility probable in the beginning, at least which make it possible that the enemies of the workers and peasants might exploit them to create disruption in the rural population.

First, the fact should not be forgotten that in certain parts of the country quite a big section of the rural workers, especially agricultural workers, consists of untouchables while the peasant sections, both poor and middle, consist of touchables. In UP, Bihar, Maharashtra, Andhra, Tamilnadu and Kerala this is so. The struggles that we have been conducting all these years—mainly based as they were on the middle peasant—have not yet succeeded in battering down the caste walls even in our areas. The fact that both the middle peasant and the poor peasant have sometimes to use the services of at least the rural workers of other trades—sweeper, carpenter, blacksmith—will make them antagonistic to rural workers' wage demands and their separate movement. If this is allowed to happen, the richer sections, against whom the edge of the movement is directed, will utilise the opportunity to start caste conflicts, incite the lower sections of the peasants against the rural workers, and disrupt agrarian unity. The danger should not be underestimated. The touchable peasant in many places quite casually says that the untouchable is getting cheeky.

It must be counteracted from the very beginning by bringing before the poor and middle sections the really antirich-farmer and the antilandlord character of the day-to-day struggle. They should be made to realise that it is a part of their own struggle against the same oppressors. As far as possible, in any new area, strike demonstrations, etc. should be first organised against rich farmers and landlords—wage struggles should be directly carried on against them—so that the antirich-farmer and antilandlord character is clearly seen. Secondly, such demands as a living wage etc. should be properly explained as another aspect of the same struggle which fights for land for the poor peasant, etc. A living wage for the worker and decent livelihood for the peasant is our demand. It should be explained like this. The misconception that he will have to foot the bill should go.

The landlords and the rich will foot the bill. He also will benefit thereby. This will come by overthrowing the exploiters, etc. The same explanation must be given to the middle peasants. In all cases patient explanation and campaigns to see that the unity is not disrupted are necessary. If this precaution is not taken the struggle of the workers will be betrayed.

Finally, we must take into consideration our past. Our base is primarily a middle-peasant base. We have no desire to liquidate this work of a decade. We must desperately attempt to retain him, answer his doubts, etc., do everything to see that he is saved from going over to the wrong side even temporarily, or from taking a merely neutral attitude towards this question. At the same time, we must decisively go ahead, carrying forward the struggle and overcome his vacillations through it, if they are not overcome before. All opportunities for explaining, propaganda, solving doubts and creating solidarity should be taken—all tactical handlings of struggles, when to start, how to start, etc.—but we cannot sacrifice the tempo of the struggle for him, cannot wait till he is convinced, till his doubts are solved. If we do sufficient propaganda and do not leave him to his fate, if we continue to maintain our links with him in the course of the struggle, then his doubts will more and more disappear as he sees the agrarian workers fighting desperately. His vacillations however are bound to be great.

## XVI

We must refer to another organisational aspect—the role of peasant committees in the struggle of land—of peasant committees as organs of struggle. Our full slogan should be ‘Nationalisation of Land’ and its distribution for use through peasant committees—which, we should take care to see, are mainly composed of the poor peasants and rural proletarians—i.e. that they are in majority, though the middle peasant will also be there. This committee tradition must be created in the day-to-day struggle itself—whether it is a struggle against ejectment, for wage, or for the occupation of land. The committee—elected committee in the course of the struggle, and not the sabha committee—which throws up new militant elements, must be the

broad democratic organ to conduct struggles. It must be the real authority, respected by the people, consisting of active elements thrown up by the struggles, and before which capitulation and vacillation in the leadership, etc. can be exposed. It must be made into the authority—and it can be because it is elected in the course of the struggle and therefore looked upon as the embodiment of unity whose word is law, the call of the movement. Our comrades must popularise these committees and function them as the democratic organs of struggle, and rouse pride in them. They are the weapons of rank-and-file leadership and they must be fully used. When out of the partial struggles the committee idea takes root, it comes into automatic play whenever the masses fight, and gives organised form to the struggle. And when the struggle reaches wide dimensions, leading to the seizure of land, they become the revolutionary peasant committees to seize land and, at a still higher stage, the basis of peasant soviets. Unless the committee is an organ of struggle, is consciously developed as the proper organisational form, the class leadership will not emerge.

## XVII

This analysis of the agrarian problem ought to give us the class alignment not only in the agrarian revolution but also in the people's democratic revolution, the organisation of which is our immediate task. The class alignment in our rural areas, which contains the vast majority of our people, is of vital importance in the struggle for people's democracy.

Who are the enemies and who are the friends of the proletariat in the revolutionary struggle for people's democracy? Against whom is it directed, who is to be overthrown? What is the difference between the present period and the previous period?

First, the people's democratic revolution is directed towards the overthrow of the political rule of the bourgeoisie. This is a basic change in the situation. Formerly our perspective was: overthrow the imperialist rule, paralyse the instability of the bourgeoisie. Today, it is not neutralisation of the compromising role but direct vanquishing of the bourgeois rule in a political battle. From the old position of opposition indirectly, the bourgeoisie has become the spearhead of Indian counterrevolution.

Where do the feudal landlords, princes, etc. stand? The agrarian revolution must liquidate feudalism. The people's democratic revolution is simultancously directed against feudalism.

In the agrarian areas it must also struggle against the capitalist elements and attack their monopoly in land. The agrarian revolution thus contains both elements, the struggle against feudal exploitation as well as capitalist exploitation.

What about imperialism? The struggle for real independence and freedom of the country is no longer a struggle for a national state, but a struggle to take the country out of the orbit of world-imperialist, world-capitalist order; to join the democratic socialist system. People's democracy and remaining within the imperialist orbit are diametrically opposed to each other.

Here we find the interlacing of the democratic and socialist revolutions. The task of liquidating the feudal order is linked with the task of overthrowing the political rule of the bourgeoisie—a task to be accomplished under the leadership of the proletariat.

The task of national independence is linked with the task of breaking away from the capitalist orbit and going into the socialist system of countries—an interlinking of the two, which comes about because the present democratic revolutions are taking place in the context of the developing world-socialist revolution. The meaning of two camps today becomes more and more clear—on the one hand, the camp of imperialism and capitalist order, and on the other hand, the camp of socialism and democracy. The struggle for freedom from imperialist aggression becomes directly linked with the struggle for the overthrow of the capitalist order on a world plane.

Which are the classes that will be the driving forces of this people's democratic revolution?

First, the proletariat, which alone can take a lead in vanquishing the political rule of the bourgeoisie and which must lead it.

Secondly, the rural proletarian and semiproletarian masses, poor peasants, both of whom struggle against feudal as well as capitalist exploitation. The former is the nearest to the proletariat and is directly exploited by the capitalist elements and expresses the antagonism of commodity production far more sharply than any other rural section. Neither has got any chance of de-

cent existence unless socialism is achieved. They together constitute the big majority of the rural population.

Then come the vacillating allies. The middle peasant vacillates most; firstly, because his social orientation is towards the rich peasant against whom the people's democratic alliance has to fight; secondly, he vacillates most because the struggle calls him to fight the bourgeois government about which he has illusions. His vacillations therefore become violent, especially when he realises that the Congress government is to be fought. His vacillations were of a quite different type when it was a question of anti-imperialist struggle and following the oppositional bourgeoisie—he vacillated but he was able to overcome his vacillations because of his anti-imperialist and antifeudal hatred. But today he vacillates most because when he is asked to fight the bourgeois government and rich peasants, he is called upon to fight all that which he aspires to be, his ideal so to say. His vacillations will be therefore of the most violent type.

And yet he can be won over; there is an important place for him in the alliance because he is a victim of both feudal and capitalist exploitation, and the grim truth of life will teach him to ally himself with the fighting forces. The struggle for the alliance of the middle peasant is a vital struggle and it will be successful to the extent the other sections inspire confidence in him by their decisive action. But any neglect of conscious efforts to win him over would prove fatal.

Then comes the petty bourgeoisie of the town and city. The intellectuals, the upper sections, and part of the lower sections get split from the main front, and sections of them range themselves against the proletariat. These are sections who form the upper crust of the state bureaucracy, army, organs of state, and occupy privileged positions as managers, officials in business concerns, factories, establishments, etc.—all of whom look to the present bourgeois government to protect their privileged position.

The remaining—the employees, school teachers, students, clerks, lower-grade officials, etc.—vacillate, but a section takes a more and more decisive stand and gets socialist minded. The winning over of this section of the petty bourgeoisie is of vital importance.

In all this, where does the rich peasant, peasant bourgeoisie, stand? Does he vacillate? Can he be neutralised? No. He is one of the main enemies in the rural areas—in fact, the spearhead of bourgeois-feudal reaction in rural areas. First, he is a capitalist and he looks upon the government as his government. Any movement directly against that government, he knows, is directed against him—hence he fights doggedly. Secondly, he is an exploiter and the agrarian revolution, which is out to attack his monopoly in land and his exploitation of labour, ranges him against the alliance. He becomes the most fanatical defender of the government, of reaction, of the present order.

The disposition of class forces then appears as follows: The proletariat, basing itself firmly on the rural proletariat and poor peasants, marches in alliance with the middle peasant, against the landlords, while fighting the rich peasants, for the overthrow of the political rule of the bourgeoisie, for the overthrow of feudalism, for taking the country out of the imperialist orbit, for a democratic dictatorship of workers and peasants.

Such is the disposition of the class forces which emerges from our analysis. Such is the meaning of the proletariat basing itself firmly on the rural proletariat and poor peasants.

The alliance, the disposition of the class forces, also shows the interlacing of the democratic revolution with the socialist revolution.

The preponderating force in the class alliance—the force of the proletariat—leading the rural proletariat and poor peasantry, is the basis of the socialist revolution, is the force which brings about the socialist revolution. Thus the main class force is already born and reaching for the next task.

The alliance by overthrowing feudalism discharges the task of the democratic revolution. The direct overthrow by the proletariat of the political rule of the bourgeoisie gives it a proletarian socialist character.

The task of breaking away from the capitalist orbit strengthens this character. At the same time, the immediate result of the alliance, the democratic dictatorship of workers and peasants, marks the stage as completion of the democratic revolution, accentuates the class struggle, strengthens the leadership of the working class and its alliance with toiling peasants.



But all the necessary elements for marching to the next stage are already there. Apart from nationalisation, etc. the main weapon—the alliance of the proletariat and rural workers and poor peasants—is already dominant, and it cannot rest without marching to the next stage, because none of its problems gets solved without socialism. The overthrow of the political rule of the bourgeoisie deprives the class enemy of the state weapon and places it in the hands of the toilers. How quickly the democratic dictatorship of workers and peasants—or the people's democratic state—enters the second phase, i.e. the dictatorship of the proletariat, depends on how firmly the alliance of the proletariat with rural workers and poor peasants marches against the bourgeoisie, how firmly the leadership of the proletariat is established so that the state is firmly used to break the resistance of the bourgeoisie; how free the proletariat and its party are from illusions about peaceful struggle. Then people's democracy passes from the first to the second stage, the socialist stage—thus the interlacing takes place.

# 1949

## I

### **Railway Strike and Our Tasks**

Trembling before the coming strike of the railway workers, the Nehru government has struck at us and the workers by effecting arrests of hundreds of railway workers all over India.

This special concentration on the active workers and worker-leaders is an attempt to deprive the coming struggle of its most militant and determined leadership, coming straight from the ranks.

Simultaneously in close collaboration with the treacherous government, its fifth column, Jayaprakash Narayan and the gang of reformist traitors, has struck from within attempting to create confusion and disruption in the ranks of the workers, isolate the militant leadership and the workers under our influence and enabling the government to strike at them.

Jayaprakash's latest statement, in which he vaguely

Circular issued on 22 February 1949.

protests only against the arrest of workers belonging to unions affiliated to the All-India Railwaymen's Federation, is nothing but a call to the government to arrest only our people, members of unions under our influence and assure the government that he supports such arrests.

Though we had anticipated the treachery of Jayaprakash & Co, still because of deep-seated reformism inside the party the fight against the treacherous policy of the socialist leaders has been halting and sometimes only formal. It is only recently that our party decided that strike of railway workers to protect their interests had to be led whether the AIRF leadership supported it or not.

In these circumstances the treachery of Jayaprakash no doubt creates difficulties in the way of a swift all-India action, for the socialist leaders continue to hold influence over large sections and confuse the ranks.

The question before the party is therefore how to meet this treachery and see that the full initiative of the workers is unleashed.

Of course there will be some at least in the party who will grow panicky at the opposition of the socialists, and especially at the repression launched by the government. They will be demoralised by the barrage of propaganda in the bourgeois press and advocate treachery, as the traitors and strike-breakers of the Benares DC have done. The recent resolutions of the PB have exposed that vacillations before struggle, panicky retreat before it, amounting to betrayal constitute the main deviation inside the party. It is therefore quite possible and natural for these deviations to arise in one form or another on the eve of the strike. It must be understood by all comrades that such vacillations constitute nothing short of treachery to the cause of the railway workers; that those who show them have no place inside the party.

These vacillators will mask their treachery by talking about 'vanguardism'—as the Benares strike-breakers and traitors have done; or they will adopt some other slogan

saying strike is not possible etc. and make use of the bourgeois propaganda in the press which soon will start propagating that no strike is now possible.

With this warning against the vacillators in our own ranks all our comrades, party organisations, all comrades working on the railway front must bend their efforts towards bringing about the strike.

Under what conditions do we have to carry on the strike? Firstly, under conditions in which the government has opened a frontal offensive against the railway workers—the precursor of the general offensive against the working class—the offensive of wage-cuts, mass retrenchment—in short, the offensive to pass on the burdens of the capitalist crisis to the backs of the workers.

Our party members must clearly realise that the withdrawal of grain concessions is an open wage-cut, the first of the sorties which must inevitably follow in the absence of successful resistance. The government no longer seeks to negotiate, postpone or hold out hopes of better conditions. It openly demands surrender on the part of the workers and wants them to accept wage-cuts—reduction of the present standard of living. The government is out for a trial of strength with the workers and out to defeat them. If it succeeds it will take further steps to intensify labour, carry out mass retrenchments and effect all those monstrous cuts which the capitalist exploiter requires.

Here therefore there is no room for parleying. Such parleyings mean betrayal. It means accepting the first wage-cut without a battle. In fact because of our lack of vigilance and socialist leaders' treachery the government has to a certain extent outwitted the workers. The strike should have begun on 1 January when concessions were withdrawn. It has been postponed, and the reformists and government were given time to disrupt the burning indignation. That was a very bad mistake but we have done our best to retrieve it now.

Not only the immediate future of the railway workers

but of the entire working class depends on the resistance the railway workers can offer. If the present offensive succeeds easily the government and capitalists are bound to follow it in quick succession with similar offensive in all industries. This is so because already the capitalist crisis has reached the stage of open bursting. Stocks are accumulating, and capitalists are demanding open wage-cuts and retrenchment as the way out. Lockouts have started. The only thing that has deterred the government and the capitalists from opening a full offensive till now is the resistance of the workers, the fear that resistance might lead to revolutionary results. Now they must face the risk of the resistance of the workers leading to big upheavals—they cannot mark time.

This means the crisis is bursting out; this means that the capitalists and the government seek to solve the crisis in their favour by means of bullets, machineguns and rifles, not just postpone the issue.

The strike is thus a call for meeting the challenge of the government and the capitalist class. The strike is one of the most important parts of the revolutionary struggle called forth by capitalist crisis—struggle to solve the crisis in favour of the working class—the struggle which at a higher stage necessarily develops into a struggle for power. Whoever now deserts strike, shows vacillations—really abandons all struggle against the capitalists and government.

To achieve their aim, the solution of the capitalist crisis at the expense of the workers, by wage-cuts, the government will move decisively and quickly—unless on each occasion it meets with dogged resistance from the workers—unless the CPI, mobilising workers and its following from other sections, not only repels such attacks but creates the consciousness and organisation to raise the question of power to solve the crisis permanently in favour of the toiling masses.

By leading isolated battles, by leading isolated strikes,

by resisting at every step the capitalist offensive, the CPI teaches the workers to fight, and creates in them the consciousness that the problem of poverty is a problem of political power. When the political thesis of the second congress described the period as a revolutionary period, it precisely meant thereby a situation in which the capitalists will be compelled to force the masses into action repeatedly, and in which the party will be able to lead the masses and make them see that the present rule must go. The daily struggles of the masses are struggles full of revolutionary import. They are links in the living chain which leads to power. Every attack defeated here, every attack strongly resisted, means more confidence to the army of the proletariat, more organisation to challenge the rule of capitalists and put an end to all misery. Every partial demand won, is not only a source of relief but also a source of confidence in the victory of the working class. That is why in defending the day-to-day interests doggedly—we never forget the fact that ultimately poverty will not end without ending the capitalist rule, and while working for the final aim we never forget the daily struggle in which the masses are trained to equip for the final battle. Success in these struggles means so much relief as well as organisation; it means paralysation of capitalist offensive; it means preventing the class enemy from launching his offensive, preparation to opening our counteroffensive.

It is in this background the coming railway strike must be understood.

Firstly, if we are vigilant and active, despite government repression and socialist treachery, the railway strike, even from the beginning, will be of a very extensive character involving tens of thousands of workers. It will not be like any isolated ordinary strike taking place in the midst of capitalist crisis but one of the biggest proletarian actions which because it is connected with the means of communication will have profound effect not only on the other sections of the workers, but on sections of peasantry also.

Secondly, the strike of the railway workers constitutes

the first big major reply of the working class to the capitalist offensive here. For the first time after the war there is going to be a decisive trial of strength between the government on the one hand and the working class on the other.

Therefore the government will utilise every method of repression, brutality, atrocity, coupled with every kind of restriction to defeat the railway workers, to disrupt their ranks so that immediately after that they can continue their offensive against other sections of the workers.

In leading the railway strike, therefore, our party shoulders the biggest responsibility because we will be in the vanguard of the working class and ours is the responsibility to paralyse further government offensive, to defeat it and to see that the interests of the railway workers are protected. It thus is not going to be like any other partial struggle but a decisive trial of strength, a political trial of strength between the two classes, the working class and the big bourgeoisie and its government.

It is this political battle, the opening battle in the post-war crisis between the working class leading the toiling millions and the capitalist class and its government, a battle which has to be fought with all the dogged resistance and strength that we can command. For on the resistance and counterattack launched here, on the defeat inflicted on the government offensive here, depends to a great extent how far the remaining sections of the workers, the big bulk of the working class, will be organised and enthused to fight and defeat the capitalist offensive, to fight and defeat this new attempt of the Nehru government to stabilise its political rule by launching economic offensive and political terror against the masses. If we succeed in putting up protracted resistance so that everyone sees that the workers are fighting and defending with great valour, if we succeed in putting up such a resistance that it bursts through the lying propaganda and wall of political isolation which the government is seeking to erect, then not only will we compel the government to withdraw

its offensive against the railway workers but we will enthuse and galvanise the other sections of the workers to such an extent that the government will not think of attacking them for a long time to come. On the other hand we can create conditions under which long before the government offensive we can launch a united proletarian counteroffensive to demand better conditions and solve the capitalist crisis in favour of the toiling millions.

The strategic importance of this struggle in the post-war revolutionary crisis that is sweeping India must therefore be understood. It is precisely because of this that the government has opened its brutal offensive against the working class, it is precisely because of this that its fifth columnists, the socialist leaders, JP and other traitors and vacillators in the ranks of the party must not only be turned out but branded as traitors and hounded out of the workingclass movement.

Under what conditions have we to lead this strike? As we have seen the conditions are, firstly, the increasing offensive of the government and the treachery of the Socialist Party leadership.

What does the government seek to achieve? The government knows that today there is acute discontent among all sections of railway workers. Such discontent on its recent offensive that a general strike of all the railways leading to complete paralysation of the means of communication and leading to still further mass actions of other sections is on the agenda.

Firstly to prevent this, to disrupt this discontent, it has taken in its confidence its henchman JP so that the accumulated discontent should not have a nationwide all-India character. With the help of socialist treachery the government hopes to keep some sections of the railway running so that the impression is created on the people that things are still normal, so that the full power of railway workers is not hurled against the government.

Secondly, the government knows and realises that it is the communists and their following that is the vanguard



of the railway workers' movement. The government realises that the underground leadership of the CP is the real guiding force of the movement, that it is connected with the mass of railway workers through hundreds of active trade-unionists, militant workers and party members who are in the open. By launching an offensive against the active railway workers, PMs and militants, the government is attempting to snap the link between the political vanguard of the working class, the CP, and the mass of railway workers. Its tactics are simple: it knows that thousands of workers will go on strike whatever happens but it wants these thousands to be deprived of any organised leadership so that the struggle becomes chaotic and can be defeated easily. The meaning of the arrest of hundreds of railway workers effected last week is this that the main active leadership which connects the mass of railway workers with the underground centre which is the guiding force of the movement is removed from the field, so that even if the strike takes place it should be without the guiding force of the party. It also means that the government has cleared the decks for enabling the socialists and other traitors to confuse the workers and approach them for their disruptive purposes.

The third form of government offensive will be through the press. Having closed down the trade-union press, having arrested all the militants and cut off the workers in different parts from their trade-union centre as well as from the party, having deprived them of all means of propaganda and agitation, the government will launch all its weapons of propaganda to create demoralisation and to spread the idea that because of repression, because of the opposition of the Socialist Party, there is not going to be any strike on 9 March. These rumours repeatedly put in the daily press will be utilised to demoralise the wavering sections, confuse other sections and even to make certain advanced sections vacillate, all the more so if they are not effectively counteracted by the workers and their organisations, by the party and its units and all the feeling

of uncertainty and vacillation is banished from the minds of the workers.

In short, the recent methods adopted by the government make it clear that from now on till 9 March it is a race between ourselves on the one hand and the disruptors, the Socialist Party, the INTUC and the government on the other, to get hold of the workers. The socialists, the INTUC and the government will count mostly on backward workers who are under the influence of the Socialist Party or the INTUC or who have illusions about the government, on our weaker sections who will vacillate most. They all will utilise every weapon of propaganda, from mass meetings; from meetings to the public, from meetings in bustees to create uncertainty, fear, terror, vacillation, so that disruption is complete.

This is the meaning of JP's treachery, of the government offensive, of the call of the INTUC and the threatening tone of all government officials and spokesmen. The fact that widespread arrests have been ordered and that full preparations have been made to carry wholesale repression clearly shows that government had no confidence that the socialist leaders will be able to prevent development of a widespread strike. In fact the government is panicky. There will be a tendency in our ranks to underestimate the strength of the workers, the intensity of the discontent amongst them and especially the strength of our own influence, because our leadership mostly coming from the petty bourgeoisie is often influenced by the bourgeois papers, by the poison that is spread by them and lose faith in the workers. The reality is that our strength is immense and if we are really able to bring the workers decisively into action, we will not only have a widespread railway strike over several railways but we can successfully paralyse almost all the railways because when the workers under the influence of the Socialist Party and others hear of large masses in action under our influence, they will instinctively strike and join their fighting brethren. The point is to realise that we have enough strength to act

on our own and through it to set in motion thousands of other railway workers who are not directly under our influence. The government knows it and therefore the government is taking steps to see that the message of our action does not reach the workers under the influence of other parties, to see that even our own workers do not get their confidence to strike decisively because of lack of propaganda, agitation and effective counteracting of the false rumours set in motion by the government.

Therefore our first and foremost task is to see that we in the coming days are able to fight the specific methods of disruption used by the government and the Socialist Party, that our first aim is to see that all the workers under our direct influence are brought on strike and secondly to see that these workers through their action as well as before they actually come on strike are able to send their message to the tens of thousands of other workers who may not be under our influence. Our first task therefore is to burst through new impediments created by the government, impediments through repression, through strangulation of our propaganda and agitation machine, through denial of the columns of the press to us and to see that we reach immediately as broad a mass of workers as is possible for us.

This in the first place means creating new links between the party and the mass of workers through active local centres, through reestablishing links with railway militants and through making these function systematically. It means, firstly regular functioning of underground or semiunderground strike committees of rank-and-file workers led by PMs, effective fight against all vacillations and doubts and creating confidence that on 9 March the workers will strike. The importance of strike committees all over has been sufficiently stressed in the previous circulars of the railway fraction and it will be a grave crime against the working class if these strike committees are not established and are not functioned. As the strike approaches these strike committees can more and more be broadened but even in

the beginning they should be sufficiently broad though they might function underground.

How will these strike committees and local party centres effectively discharge their responsibilities, to beat back socialists and disruption? The first thing that they have to do is to learn to combat this disruption on their own and not to look to the district centre or the provincial centre to give the lead. To wait for instruction from above can only be denounced as sabotage because now 90 per cent of the work depends on how far the local centres and the local committees seize the initiative in fighting disruption of the class enemy. The local strike committees and the local party centres should through posters, cyclo-styled handbills, mouth propaganda, every day counteract all the rumours that are set afloat among the workers, they themselves should study the bourgeois papers which are read by the workers and reply to the propaganda. Secondly, from party papers, from our own sources, from bourgeois press and any other source that they have got, news of resistance of railway workers in any part of the province, in any part of India, all news about meetings, processions, demonstrations in support of railway workers, all news about clashes between the workers and the government, between peasants and government, between any section of the people and the government must be broadcast to the workers through posters, handbills and other means to enthuse the railway workers that a big fight against the government is on and the strike will take place on 9 March. Locally they should see that local unions or local union leaders, mass of local workers, every other section day in and day out say something in favour of the railway workers so that the confidence of the railway workers in their own victory is strengthened. If a number of local centres and district centres go on exchanging information with each other, it will help to keep the morale of the workers and increase their confidence in their unity and strength. Needless to say the provincial centre and the TU centres should help the local centres in supplying

all such news, in counteracting all rumours, but whether provincial centre is able to do it or not, locally these tasks should be discharged.

By local centres is not meant the district or taluka centres, not even centre for a whole big city, but even centres for railway workers' colonies, for station yards, for smaller areas, for loco-sheds, workshops and departments, so that all these smaller centres really function effectively and in time. No doubt to supervise the activity of smaller areas the town committee, the city committee, the district committee, may be there but the real initiative in fighting the day-to-day propaganda of our enemies will lie with these centres and if they do not do it the strike will be jeopardised. It is not suggested that only these local committees or centres should work. The responsibilities of the higher bodies are there and must continue and they will be directly held responsible if they do not coordinate these centres and themselves do not work.

In order to help the railway leaders and railway unions to function these centres effectively, to reach as wide a mass as possible, the party must throw in as many cadres as possible on this front, to help propaganda and agitation in the coming few days. Students, workers from other industries, women, all who can be mobilised should be handed over to the local centres and committees for propaganda and agitational work under the guidance of the comrades there, for posterings, for holding bustee meetings, for using every kind of weapon to reach as many workers as possible and for calling on the workers themselves to go and broadcast the propaganda and agitation. It is a race between our propaganda and our enemy's propaganda and we must win in it. This means not only hundreds of party members should be thrown into the railway workers' strike, students and others working on other fronts; it also means that posterings, cyclostylings and other things will have to be done even in a single city and town from more than one centre, from several centres, so that we are in time on every occasion. In cities like Calcutta, we should imme-

diately see how many new cadres can be thrown into the railway strike and they should be put at the disposal of the railway comrades. Some of the leading student comrades together with student members as well as sympathisers can be thrown into the strike and can be even sent outside for propaganda and agitation. The same has to be done in other towns and cities, like Bombay, Madras, etc. In these cities especially, leading workingclass elements from other industries must be thrown into the strike, to organise the railway workers and lead them, to propagate and agitate. If they succeed in agitating alone with members of strike committees and other active railway workers they will raise in the shortest possible time a number of leaders from the rank-and-file railway workers who will make the task of propaganda and agitation very easy.

The aim of this propaganda and agitation is not only to counter the manoeuvres of the class enemy but to see that in doing so hundreds of railway workers come forward to take up the challenge and become active organisers and defenders of the strike. The aim really is to reach its voice to those who for lack of propaganda and agitation may think that the fate of the strike is already sealed. It is only by throwing the strength of the party into the strike, it is only by outrunning the power of bourgeois propaganda by our own resources and in time, that we can hope to defeat the paralysing offensive of the bourgeoisie and its agents. This is the first thing that has to be done.

One of the important tactics and important weapons of conveying our propaganda to other railways as well as to our weaker sections on our own railways is sending of delegations of sections of workers, delegations of staunch workers and even if they are arrested will still carry on enough propaganda to inspire other workers to join the battle. These delegations may start legally or may start underground, but they should visit weak centres, carry on inspiring propaganda there and if necessary some of them should even court arrest if that helps in steeling the re-

solve of the workers there. As far as possible these delegations should be in their own working dress because the average worker knows that they are just common workers like him who are being arrested and who are propagating for the strike. Proper agitation by such delegations is going to have tremendous effect on the wavering workers and will be a potent weapon of exposing the propaganda of the government and socialist leaders that the strike is only an affair of the CP and that the broad mass of workers is not interested in it.

Apart from the linking of the party with the railway workers through throwing in new cadres, through building local centres everywhere, the provincial committees must see that certain prominent members of the district committees participate in the strike, personally leading the teams and guiding them. While we want the district and provincial committees to protect their personnel yet some comrades must be spared to take the risk and lead the railway workers' struggle personally. (They should avoid arrest as far as possible.) Nonetheless they should keep personal contact with the cadres working and visiting bus-tees under proper protection, sometimes even addressing meetings and certainly addressing group meetings, so that they are in a position to see how far the work is being done and check personally mistakes. And in places like Calcutta, for instance, quite a number of the present DC can be allotted to outside areas or even sent outside Calcutta to places like Asansol and Lillooah to work there, along with local committee or group.

What should be the line of our propaganda? Apart from countering government propaganda that there is no enthusiasm for strike and that no one supports strike we will have to fight and expose government policy as has been seen in recent statements. The repressive measures taken by the government, the fact that the Congress leaders are drawing fat salaries, but they are denying the elementary rights of workers, facts of railway earnings, the fact that government has not given a single assurance

but on the other hand it is determined to pursue its offensive with the aid of repression—all these things must stand out in our agitation. We have to carry on our agitation in such a way that even in our weak centres or even in centres under socialist influence we are able to raise the slogan "Down with the Nehru Government", "For a Workers' and Peasants' Government", we are able to denounce everywhere Nehru and Patel as the agents of Tata and Birla. In many places this is immediately possible; in some places it may be possible after initial agitation. In any case the test of our successful agitation is how quickly it makes the masses echo along with us the slogan "To Hell with the Nehru Government".

The aim of our agitation is also to expose the base treachery of the Socialist Party leadership. If in the course of the strike we do not succeed in really unmasking the Socialist Party leadership as the agent of the capitalists, then we would really have failed in our task of fighting reformism successfully. Today it is therefore necessary not only not to adopt a compromising attitude on the question of exposure but also to adopt that method of exposure and that agitation that will successfully expose the socialists and force them to come out as open strike-breakers. How does JP today attempt to fool the masses? He is attempting to fool the masses by posing as if he is only postponing the strike, that he is only waiting for the negotiations to end and that something may come out of these negotiations. He is also trotting out slanders about the communists and the Soviet Union. Any exposure which only denounces JP as a traitor but does not tell the masses as to how he is stabbing the workers in the back will not have much effect on the weak and vacillating sections, especially on those who are under the influence of the socialist leadership. Such exposure will only advertise the fact that JP is opposed to strike without giving the necessary confidence that his opposition can be fought. In our exposure therefore we must clearly put before the workers that there is no question of negotiations now because the gov-



ernment has not accepted a single demand, that negotiations mean acceptance of withdrawal of cheap grain shops, that negotiations mean giving up the demand for Rs 55 as minimum wage, that negotiations mean only giving time to the government to crush the workers and this is the meaning of JP's negotiations. It is thus that we must first concretely put the facts before the workers, before we describe him either as the strike-breaker or traitor. We must use such epithets and such descriptions as would really be telling and convincing and help us to rout the socialist leadership. It is the question of concrete situation in each locality. But this does not mean that we should tone down our exposure of JP or make any appeals to him. He has to be exposed as a person who has been and is sabotaging the strike and has joined the opponents, the enemies of the railway workers. This much we have to say under all circumstances concretely on the basis of the facts as cited above. The fight for the demands of the railway workers is thus simultaneously a fight against treachery of the reformists and must be carried on as such.

Simultaneously with the exposure of JP and the socialist leaders there should be consistent appeal by our workers and our delegations to all workers under the influence of the Socialist Party as well to join this great common battle and not to act as strike-breakers. All the elementary lessons of unity and the common bond of suffering must be brought forth to stress that the struggle of the railway workers is one and indivisible, that anyone who goes against it only joins the exploiters and oppressors against his own brethren. By making this appeal to the masses of railway workers under the influence of the Socialist Party we should not in the least relax our fight against and tone down the denouncement of all those workers who take a prominent part on behalf of the SP in propagating against the strike. If a worker becomes a strike-breaker under the influence of the SP he has to be denounced and not to be pandered to. Sometimes our comrades commit the mistake of adopting a conciliatory

attitude towards such workers especially the higher-paid workers who are the followers of the SP. We must always make a distinction between misguided workers and those who are the confirmed followers of the SP and we must wage an irreconcilable struggle against all those vacillators, workers or otherwise, who oppose the strike. Our aim should be to demoralise and paralyse those strike-breakers belonging to the SP by bringing into action against them the strength and initiative of the workers. Wherever we are strong and wherever we can do it without affecting the unity of the workers we should bring out demonstrations of workers denouncing the Socialist Party leaders as strike-breakers with the slogan "Socialist Party Leaders Murdabad". Such demonstrations if they really do not split the ranks of the fighting workers are potent instruments of paralysing the Socialist Party leaders and their followers and making honest ones realise that the working class is coming against them. However in organising such demonstrations every care must be taken to see that they do not create diversion and lead to a fight among workers themselves and lead to a fight among prostrike elements. This may not be a problem in South India, Bengal, and perhaps Bihar and Assam. In UP, Bombay city and certain other parts this may have to be taken into account.

We must also expose JP's attack against communists by saying that in attacking the communists who are in the forefront of every workers' struggle, JP is only fulfilling the role of the enemy of the working class. He is attacking the only forces that consistently stand against the rule of capital and for a workers' and peasants' government. We must also denounce JP's anti-Soviet reference by saying that it is natural for him to slander the Soviet Union where the workers and peasants rule because he hates a real revolutionary fight against the rule of capital.

To sum up, the line of our attack against the Socialist Party leadership must be that they are opposing the unity of the striking workers in the interests of the capitalists,

that this is not the first time they did it, that in Bombay during the railway workers' strike in 1947, in Calcutta during the tramway workers' strike in 1948-49, and several other strikes they have repeatedly betrayed the interests of the workers and that they are following the same policy on the railways. We will judge the success of our propaganda by the result it achieves, namely how far the socialist leadership gets isolated and branded as the strike-breaking leadership.

At the same time it is incumbent on us, on all local unions and all party committees, on all the comrades on the railway workers' front, to bring to the forefront the leading role of the CP in the railway workers' struggle, through issue of handbills and posters in the name of the party, along with posters and leaflets in the name of the unions and strike committees, by making militant workers and PMs proudly own before the railway workers that they are communists and that it is the party that has made fighting men of them, by replying to all the slanders and by creating in the workers the consciousness that the CP is the party of the working class, by explaining to the workers what the party stands for and why it is the party of the working class. The tendency in our ranks not to talk in the name of the party is a false tendency which must be vigorously fought. Considering the fact that the party is actively leading the railway workers, not to bring to the forefront the name of the party in every possible way is to prevent thousands of railway workers from realising the fact that it is the party that is leading their struggle and thus prevent them from becoming members of the party. The working class will learn more about the party within ten days of the strike than in ten years of normal peaceful agitation and therefore the party must be brought to the forefront. Only when the workers see that those who lead them in person, those who suffer for them, those who fight for them, all are members of the CP and have acknowledged themselves to be members of the party, only then will thousands of workers realise that they and

the party are one, the party is not an alien organisation. In meetings, demonstrations, in speeches by individual workers, the party must be brought to the forefront, the slogans of the party should be given so that everyone knows that the party is taking a leading part in the struggle.

Apart from directly leading the railway workers, the party and its units, mass organisations under the influence of the party, have the responsibility of creating workers' and public support for the railway workers' strike and also creating conditions among workers for sympathetic action in favour of the railway workers. We must frankly realise that the government will do its best to isolate the railway workers' struggle, especially from the petty bourgeoisie, to misrepresent it and to exploit the inconveniences that might be caused by the railway strike, to fan the hatred of the petty bourgeoisie against the railway workers. The government will create panicky pictures about food famine and try to pass on the results of its own crimes to the railway workers; through press and platform, a barrage of hatred will be unleashed. This has to be fought decisively by the party as a whole and has to be fought politically by exposing every move of the government and its spokesmen. It is incumbent on the provincial committees and district committees and even lower committees to appoint a special subcommittee to meet this propaganda among the petty bourgeoisie, to counteract it effectively through leaflets, posters, by replying to arguments about food famine etc. Any neglect in doing this will react badly on the struggle as a whole.

It is true that in many places sections of petty bourgeoisie at least will not be taken in so easily by government propaganda but that is no reason why we should not effectively counteract it. In places like Calcutta there might be illusions that the railway workers' strike might lead to the same automatic sympathy that was shown to the students' struggle by the petty bourgeoisie of Calcutta. Such an illusion should not be nourished. The

government is no doubt discredited in Calcutta among the petty bourgeoisie. Still the sympathy for the student crowd was sympathy for their own class. When the railway workers enter the field and the government propaganda machine is turned against them and when the full terror is unleashed, a vacillating petty bourgeoisie may be neutralised, it will even be antagonised, unless the workers act decisively and its propaganda blows up the government campaign of slander. Any tendency to draw general conclusions from what happened in Calcutta in connection with the student demonstrations might do much harm and keep the proletariat complacent. There is no doubt that if we persuade the mass of students to fraternise with the railway workers in places like Calcutta things might go the other way and the government will be once more completely isolated. The mass of students will participate only when they see decisive action on the part of the workers and only when they are freed from the propaganda of government press. It is therefore of great importance that our party should wage a fight against the slanderous campaign that will be launched among the petty bourgeoisie so that the attempt of the government, to isolate the railway workers' struggle is defeated. This fight can be launched through leaflets, posters, in every form of propaganda and agitation that is possible. Meetings of course may not be possible. That is why we may have to fall back on other forms of agitation.

To be able to defeat the sense of isolation and uncertainty that the government wants to create in relation to the railway workers it is necessary in all the towns and cities first to get resolutions passed from the trade unions, student organisations, women's organisations and others and distribute these resolutions in support of the railway strike through our own machinery. A few such resolutions passed by organisations or even few such statements issued by various organisations appearing before the railway workers will go a long way in breaking through that sense of isolation that the government wants to create. Resolutions

should be passed by all our TU organisations, mass meetings wherever possible should be held by them to lend support to the railway workers and a number of railway workers should be called to these meetings so that they are able to broadcast the support of these meetings to other railway workers. Again, resolutions passed in these meetings should be broadcast through our own machinery among the railway workers. In cities like Calcutta and Bombay and in other towns we should organise processions of workers even in defiance of section 144 to go to the railway colonies to announce the workers' support to the railway workers' strike. Police action against such processions will be a decisive weapon in our hands to announce to the railway workers that the other workers seriously support their strike, and are determined to stand by them. Such demonstrations and big meetings convened locally or in a citywide scale will be a tremendous weapon in steeling the vacillating sections and enabling us to hurl our full strength in our strong sections. If possible a number of factories and concerns should be brought on strike on the eve of 9th of March either in sympathy with the railway workers' strike or to fight for their own grievances. By the 7th or 8th in places like Bombay or Calcutta a call for sympathetic action may be given or such sympathetic action may be reserved for the 9th itself. The advantage of having it earlier, specially if it is big, will be that it will help to remove all uncertainty among the minds of railway workers and make them to take a decisive step on the 9th. In any case we should prepare also for general action on the 9th and see that a number of industries and factories come on strike on that day in sympathy with the railway workers.

Thus through workers' actions, demonstrations, defiance of section 144, sympathetic strikes, through the support of students' and women's organisations, through leaflets and initiative of local committees, through counteracting all day-to-day propaganda and through creating a general feeling among railway workers that wide sections of the

workingclass and nonworkingclass masses are supporting it, we must tear down the wall of isolation which the government seeks to build and unleash the railway workers' struggle so that it quickly develops all over India.

Any plan which neglects these initial preparations is likely to jeopardise the very development of the strike or make it very indecisive and restricted affair thus helping the enemies of the working class.

To the extent that we do all these things in every important railway town, in every strategic railway centre, to that extent we will increase the sweep of the strike and send its message beyond our own following which itself is sufficiently big, bringing into the struggle the mass of workers on all the railways. There should be no hesitation and uncertainty on this point. The discontent among the railway workers is swelling up so much that no amount of promises from JP & Co will be actually in a position to stop it once the railway workers get the confidence that a united action is already on. What the bourgeoisie and the enemies of the working class are telling the workers is that no united action is possible without JP & Co. What we must show to them, demonstrate to them, in action is that united action is on despite the opposition of the Socialist Party and in order to demonstrate this we must burst through the special methods of disruption which are going to be used by the government and the socialist leaders and we should on no account neglect or fail to counter-act propaganda and agitation carried on by the bourgeois press and statements of leaders like JP and others. But there are comrades whose faith in the strength of the fighting forces is so much undermined by the propaganda of the bourgeois press that they surrender instead of fighting it.

So far as we are concerned the struggle for safeguarding the strike, to extend and deepen it is from the beginning going to be a political struggle of first-rate importance in which the government will be fighting us with all the political and repressive weapons at its command and in which we will be able to organise the strike

only by defeating these political weapons. Therefore we cannot look upon the present struggle as merely a partial struggle of the old type but as a struggle which once we break through the initial repression of the government is capable of reaching new and high revolutionary forms. The present is a period in which we see the great Telangana struggle still going on despite the army of the Nehru government with all its modern weapons and despite the mass terror that it has launched. The present is a period in which we see that the masses on their own are resisting the arrest of and defending their leaders and members of the CP and peasant women are coming forward protecting and defending their leaders. This desperation and this death-defying spirit is the hallmark of a people which is getting ready for a decisive conflict with the present government, which is getting ready for revolution. The railway workers' struggle is a part of this great revolutionary conflict and once the full force is unleashed it might rise to any heights. It might rise to any new height even locally if the full force is unleashed in big towns, cities like Calcutta. Such is the potentiality of the strike. That is why the government is panicky and trembling before it. That is why the members of the party cannot look upon the struggle as a partial struggle but one in which the government will resort to every kind of atrocity and one which will be fought with all the brutality, doggedness and decisiveness of a civil war. We must therefore be ready not only to protect the struggle, not only to defend the workers, but also to see that it really becomes a popular struggle in reply to government terror and that we are able to bring large sections of the people to hurl back the might of the government and its policy of repression, that we are able to inspire the people to raise along with us the slogan of "Down with the Nehru Government". It is just because these potentialities exist that the government would do its best to see that the struggle is isolated and remains at best a railway workers' struggle. Our policy will be to make it an all-workers' struggle and later on an all-people's struggle.



From the very beginning the struggle will assume a very ferocious character. There are rumours that the government will take steps to drive the workers out of their quarters, that it will cut their water supply, that it will stop their rations, etc. Apart from that there will be mass arrests, firings and shootings, lathicharges and atrocities on railway workers' women and children. In this struggle therefore as soon as the mood of the masses rises, there is no question of obeying any law or any order, there is no question of courting arrests tamely. Every attack of the police must be resisted with all the resources at our command. The colonies and quarters of railway workers must be defended and barricaded. In resisting the attacks on railway workers the entire working class and entire people must be invited to participate. When the railway workers are attacked with brutal weapons we will resist with all the means at our command and we must prepare from the beginning for that. That is, we must be in a position to offer armed resistance whenever the workers are attacked. And not wait for attack either. We must be in a position to anticipate the attack and launch our own attack and take the enemy by surprise. What we have to see is that the resistance of the workers does not remain a partial affair, it develops into an affair of the entire working class so that the entire working class takes up the challenge of the government. The attack and repression against the railway workers should be used to rouse sections of the petty bourgeoisie also to take up the challenge of the government. We must be ready for such attacks from the very beginning, we must be ready to resist them with determination and decisiveness. Our TU organisations from now onwards must carry on such propaganda among other sections of workers that any attack against the railway workers will quickly bring them to their feet, will bring them into streets and enable us and them to take up the challenge of the government. The old method of giving a call after the firing must be replaced by the new method of keying up the expectations of the workers to the highest pitch so that as soon as an

attack takes place we are able to bring them into the streets in the shortest possible time. All our plans of militant resistance hinge upon the possibility of bringing large mass of workers into the streets. If we succeed in doing that then we will be able to resist repression successfully and rout the forces of the government.

The events of 18-19 January in Calcutta when the students raised barricades demonstrates both the weakness of the situation as well as its strength. The fact that a section of the petty bourgeoisie, the university students, was forced to resist with arms the armed attack of the forces of the government demonstrates how the government is getting discredited in the class which supports it, its own class, and how deep the discontent is among the lower sections of the petty bourgeoisie. But the fact that the working class was not brought into the streets also led to the result that a decisive battle could not be given though even then the government had to retreat and withdraw section 144. Ten times more discontent is accumulated among the workers. Any militant action properly propagated and organised will lead to results of great importance challenging the very power of the government in places like Calcutta. But the whole thing depends upon whether we are able to bring the power of the large mass of workers into the streets. Once that power is on the streets nothing can stop them from marching forward and that power can be brought into action if from now onwards we are able to propagate among other sections of workers about the importance of the railway strike. If we bear this in mind, there is no limit to the potentialities which might follow out of such developments. The entire system of government can be paralysed, the entire machinery of repression can be put out of action and the forces of the government can be even routed, locally in towns and cities.

What exactly is to be done in such a situation, which are the strategic points to be attacked, which are the seats of oppression to be demolished and which are the key personnel that may be vanquished are things which will have

to be studied by special committees. But from now onwards we must make special preparations for adopting militant resistance, for fighting the forces of the government, for raising barricades if attacked and so on.

In this connection it is incumbent on every committee of the party and also the strike committee of the railway workers to appeal to the police and the army not to shoot on the workers and to turn their weapons against their own oppressors and disarm their officers. Through our propaganda and agitation we must concentrate against the higher officials, appeal to the ranks of the police and demoralise the officials and make them panicky about their own ranks. We must see whether we can bring about a strike of the police and synchronise it with the strike of the railway workers. We must adopt bold tactics and appeal to the police in the course of demonstration through megaphones etc. to join the people and disarm the officers. This does not mean that we will not fight the police when they fire on us but we should make every effort to win the lower ranks of the armed and other police to our side, especially because the police themselves are wavering nowadays. We should also appeal to the armed forces whenever they are brought in operation against us.

It was seen on 18-19 January in Calcutta that the police wavered and did not open fire and the military had to be called. This is a sign of the times. One such success in winning over the police will increase the confidence of the masses so much that it will inspire them to new and decisive action. The police should be approached as part of the same class from which the workers and peasants come. They should be appealed to in the name of their own class and also in the name of their own grievance. They should be openly told not to serve the capitalist-landlord government, not to oppress their own brethren. So also the armed forces.

In rural areas, when means of communications are paralysed, we can bring into operation our peasant mass and make a straight bid for taking possession of the land of the landlords and drive out the landlords and exploiters

from the villages; we should take possession of whatever means of defence that might be there and defend the railway workers in their fight. We should try to swing in large masses of agricultural workers, poor peasants and others in this struggle, all the more because most of the gangmen and others are either agricultural labourers and poor peasants who directly come from these classes.

In cities and towns the aim of our activity should be to bring about complete stoppage of all industries in a general strike to help the railway workers so that this strike reaches a higher pitch.

All this means that this railway workers' strike itself should from the very beginning be organised with sufficient strength so that the entire section of the people is impressed with it and the government propaganda is punctured from the very beginning.

It is obvious that the situation is such that in many places and towns and cities the struggle may develop to the highest pitch of armed struggle against the government and we must be prepared to lead it. It should be our conscious endeavour to develop it to that pitch. It is only by putting the maximum resistance possible that we will not only be able to defend the interests of the railway workers and the entire working class but to transform this vast army of workers in the course of struggle into a new revolutionary army out to defeat and overthrow the present government of capitalists and landlords. The resistance that we put in the course of this struggle will really transform the entire working class if that resistance is of a decisive and revolutionary character.

And if we organise our initial preparations well in those places where we have the combination of our strong influence over railway workers with strong peasant bases, we will develop the fight to the pitch of Telangana and will be able to carry it on for months without being defeated. But about these prospects we need not dilate further. Our task today is to see that these are the potentialities of the struggle and we must clear the decks for it by firstly organising the strike on as wide a scale as possible. Only by

doing this we will successfully resist the Nehru government's attack to throw the burdens of the capitalist crisis on the workers and to stabilise its rule on the basis of economic exploitation and political terror.

And only by offering such resistance and paralysing the government machinery everywhere, paralysing its means of communications, will we be able to help the great struggle in Telangana which is still holding out despite the fact that we as a party have done practically nothing to help it all over India. A decisive railway strike with all its attendant developments might break the backbone of the oppressors of Telangana and put them to flight. Not only that, it might help our comrades to extend further beyond Telangana into the remaining part of Hyderabad.

It is in this background of these responsibilities that every comrade, every member of the party and every party committee has to understand its own responsibility towards the railway strike and throw its full weight into the struggle. Its first task is to remove from the field and from strategic positions all those comrades, whatever may be their seniority and position, who are likely to vacillate in the mass struggle and who might betray the party and the working class. Such persons must be thrown out of key positions and transferred to different places or different fronts. The most trusted and fighting elements must be put in key positions on behalf of the party so that the name of the party is not disgraced in this critical period. A very good deal depends on the personal heroism and sacrifice of our comrades, of those who will be in charge, DC members and others who will be in the railway colonies and quarters, or for defying the bans or fighting or taking offensive. In this struggle the members of the party should set a new standard of heroism and unflinching courage and workers must know that with death-defying courage the members of the party, their party, will fight. On occasions of clash and conflict, it is sometimes necessary to put well-known communists in the forefront so that every worker sees that the communists are by his side. Those who shirk, those who flinch, those

who waver or vacillate, will be guilty of treachery to the party and the working class. And during the course of the strike many more party leaders can actually leave their underground shelters with safety and actively participate in the railway workers' struggle, agitation, demonstration and even in defence. Remaining underground should not mean remaining underground from the class struggle, from one of the biggest class actions of the workers under our leadership. While taking proper precautions for the safety of the party and safety of its personnel, comrades can be released to organise the fighting squads of the railway workers, to actively participate in the fighting, so that we get steeled in battle and the party learns out of the struggle.

On every committee, on every PM, therefore lies the responsibility to give his best to this great and big struggle organised by our party, the precursor of the mighty revolutionary battles that are looming ahead. This first skirmish is going to be the test of the fighting heroism and courage of our PMs, of our loyalty to the party and of the organising capacity and the capacity for leadership of our party units. The manner in which we lead it, the decisiveness with which we fight the battle, is going to decide whether the party in the immediate future, in the next few months, is going to be the biggest proletarian force in India claiming the loyalty of tens of thousands of workers or whether it is to continue to be a small affair as it is now. There is no doubt that the hundreds of PMs who have fought the most tenacious battles in the earlier years of the party, who have withstood the goondaism of the Congress with all their courage, who have seen many strike battles, will lead the party to its success, will lead the railway workers to victory, will fight back all repression and out of the struggle will forge a new party based upon the mass of the workers, a party which will symbolise the fact that vast masses of workers have given up their illusions about the reformist leadership and have consciously chosen the revolutionary leadership of their party, the Communist party.

## **II**

### **Letter on the Reaction to March Ninth**

You are meeting to discuss the railway strike. The reports already received from some provinces about reactions to 9th March show that as usual the vacillators are drawing their interpretation of the big events.

What are the facts? Firstly, that the CPI trailing behind the reformists had failed to take up the cause of the railway workers earlier. A strike which should have started on 1 January was delayed for 2½ months.

Secondly, the government came out with the most ferocious repression and sweeping arrests. The number of arrests is not less than 2000. Nehru said on 20 February that 800 were arrested. The *Times of India* reported that in 48 hours preceding the 9th alone 800 were arrested.

The arrest of 2000 railway workers meant a clean sweep of every militant and active railway worker.

In addition in places railway colonies were surrounded, and all our links were snapped.

Never was there so sweeping arrests before any strike. It had not happened in the history of India. And never had there been so many workers working in any industry arrested. On top of this was the virtual establishment of martial law.

The traitors and vacillators will forget this elementary fact about governmental repression. If you accept their reasoning it means that you must first secure a guarantee from the government that there will be no repression before we can think of a strike. This is joshism once again.

Firstly, the widescale and sweeping repression must wake our ranks to the fact that strikes are now grim class battles and only those who dare fight them should call themselves communists. It is no longer cricket. The railway strike must open the eyes of our ranks to the fact that what has happened in connection with the railway strike will happen in every strike—i.e. mass repression—and that we, the party of the working class, must train the workers to break through this, to defeat this, or give up all pretence to fight the capitalist class.

This kind of repression is going to be our fate in every strike and it is precisely intended to turn us from the path of struggle. The capitalist class lashed into fury by the resistance of the working class, determined to show its American masters that it can hold India against the communists and panicky before the developments in China and Southeast Asia, is unleashing full repression in the very first skirmishes to prevent further developments. At this juncture any deflection from opposition to it is nothing short of treachery.

Secondly, it must be understood that this ferocious repression is a sign of weakness of the government and not strength. It was an open admission that notwithstanding the Congress and socialist influence, and the waverings of the majority of the railway workers, the government was afraid—and very correctly afraid—that if we succeed in making a big breach anywhere the entire pentup discontent would burst through. The waverers could be paralysed only by striking at us, by creating allround terror, by creating an atmosphere that there was no one to speak for strike. And to do this they had to arrest more than 2000 railway workers.

The government dared not stake either on its own prestige or the hold of JP. It dared not. This is the plain and simple truth that must be understood.

Thirdly, the weakness of government position must be understood from yet another fact. Was it possible to defeat this repression? Of course it was. The repression would have had no effect on the strike, rather it would have



strengthened the strike, if the party had taken up the fight against JP earlier, and the illusions and hopes about him had been fought earlier. With a greater section of railway workers already free from confusion and illusion, the repression would have been completely defeated.

Party members must realise that it is treachery combined with unprecedented repression that has given the first temporary setback to the railway workers.

Neither treachery nor repression alone could do it.

It may be asked by the waverers, the vacillators, the cowards—but could we not have waited till the workers had shed illusions about JP—should we not have till then campaigned against JP and exposed him? Some such line has been advocated by the Tamilnadu PC.

It must be bluntly stated there was no other course. We could not have waited just because all the limits of verbal propaganda, of verbal exposure, had been reached. First the ordinary worker sees the real difference between the revolutionary and reformist in action and not in words. The difference between communists and reformists had to come before the workers in action. The idea that first the **majority** is won and is made to shed its illusion about reformists through verbal propaganda and then strike action is launched is a reformist idea and has nothing in common with Marxism.

All the elements necessary for a struggle were there. Firstly the attack on workers was there—the grain concession was withdrawn; the other grievances were there; and all the demands had been turned down. We also were almost guilty of treachery to the railway workers when we gave up the decision for Rs 55 minimum wage etc. and confined only to rectification of anomalies.

Anyway the attack had started. The grain concessions were withdrawn. The mass of workers wanted to resist. JP or no JP, they would have followed us in action, and they had seen us leading it. Not to have attempted to lead them would have meant that in future attacks the workers would have held us as much guilty as JP, and correctly so.

It would have meant refusal to fight, it would have meant treachery.

And just because we were near success we were met with ferocious repression and full propaganda was turned against us.

Had we not decided to break with the reformist past and decided to give a fight against the first attack on the railway workers—we would have been damned as great betrayer as JP.

Many people seem to think that the working class and the attack of the capitalists do not matter. What matters is the prestige of certain leaders; the party's role is not to lead but to follow, give calls only when there is 100 per cent guarantee that they will be obeyed and if repression comes sit quiet. The party on the other hand bases its slogans and calls on objective conditions, on the tempo of the workers, their mood etc. and seeks to lead them by overcoming their vacillations. It knows very well that on occasions the majority will vacillate, even when their wage is in question, and the party alone can lead them by overcoming their vacillations. The party also realises the possibility of any partial struggle being crushed, disorganised, etc. by severe repression or extreme vacillations created by political terror. But it is only by teaching the workers to overcome these, by teaching them that not to meet the challenge does not solve the question, by telling them that there is a force always ready to organise and lead the struggle, that the party educates the masses.

To judge each struggle in isolation, instead of in the context of the general struggle of the working class is nothing but reformism. To judge each struggle, its success, defeats, or failures, in the context of the general struggle of the working class is the hallmark of Marxism.

It may be asked why was there such a nationwide failure of the strike? Why did we not have a strike even in stronger areas? Firstly, because of the fact that it was precisely in the stronger areas that savage repression was launched, every key cadre had been picked up. On the SIR in 48 hours

preceding the 9th, not less than 300 persons were arrested according to the *Times of India*. The so-called 'pockets' of communist influence were located and repressed.

Secondly, the arrest of 2000 from our strongholds was not only a heavy blow, it was a crushing blow, because the party had not yet got out of reformist methods of organisation with its emphasis on the wholtime organisers and lack of attention to the working worker and his leadership. The formation of strike committees, of broadbased strike committees had hardly begun: like the old days the mass was to be drawn in—after the strike.

Now more than ever our comrades will see how every failure to stick to basic organisational experience and truths leads to disaster. The strike committees are weapons of rank-and-file leadership; in strikes, the TU leaders or executives are not enough; for they can be easily repressed.

Thirdly, there is also a nauseating tale of vacillation, betrayal, cowardice in our ranks also; and apart from this a complacence born out of the failure to understand that the government will strike with all its strength. The tempo and organisation of work since January seems to be of the days of legality—of the days when strikes could be easily postponed for another six months. Otherwise how could one explain the Tamilnadu provincial committee's plea for postponement under the plea that there was not enough time to organise the strike? Can you ever get more than 2½ months in times of revolutionary developments to organise a strike?

Horrible opportunism, reformist mistakes, complacence, etc. were shown on the GIP—there was failure to bring the masses to the forefront.

And so in the first big skirmish—the railway workers' resistance was slayed by the government through brutal offensive. Should this fact cause dismay and panic in our ranks? The government expects the ordinary worker to believe that the struggle against the government is a lost cause; that it is too difficult, that it is impossible to struggle

against the government; but the government never expects that it will make the communists believe it. Yet there seem to be some members, who are so revolutionary that they become panicky like the backward workers at the very first offensive. Many of these of course normally talk about the Red Army, about Mao and the Chinese red army; but they forget that Mao had to evacuate Yen-an only a couple of years back—and no one suggested to reconsider whether it was right to give fight to Chiang; and when nazi armies were near Moscow no one suggested to reconsider whether it was right to have opposed Hitler at all.

In the struggles, strike battles and revolutionary struggle for power—there will be many ups and downs; those who do not understand this know nothing of Marxism and make a mockery of workingclass struggle.

The fact that in the first skirmish the government has been able to enforce a wagecut without a major battle of resistance is very menacing. It means that taking advantage of this fact new offensive will open, forcing the workers into action. If because of the result of the first fight we get desperate, we will be helping the government in carrying on its offensive. The defence of railway workers is of primary importance to us and our attention must be concentrated on the coming battle.

The government has stayed the resistance in the first skirmish. It has not won the battle. The failure of the strike has not solved a single question. On the other hand the attack against the railway workers will burst forth in all its intensified form. And it has to be met. We alone can meet it.

The government may launch the attack piecemeal—taking advantage of the present confusion and initially we must be prepared to lead local struggles—protracted and bitterly fought. The piecemeal attack may be concentrated on our areas—and we must resist, or it may take the all-India form and we must resist again. In any case local struggles should not be scrapped in the name of all-India struggles. They should be extended.

We enter the next phase with many favourable factors. Firstly the Nehru government stands before large sections of the workers as a terror regime, as a government which will not do anything unless coerced.

The illusions about the government therefore will be much less.

Secondly, the role of JP & Co also stands much more clearly as that of strike-breakers and traitors—which though it need not be exaggerated—yet certainly must not be underestimated. The railway workers have seen hundreds of their brethren being arrested—and JP & Co helping the government. To think that this does not mean anything—a new weapon to undermine reformism is to be a non-Marxist. This is a big weapon and has to be ruthlessly used with great confidence. Henceforth JP & Co can be held directly responsible for all the attacks and the disruptors can be fought better.

The offsetting factor will be petty-bourgeois panic in our own ranks and despondency among backward rail workers. If these are allowed to persist we cannot utilise the favourable factors.

No doubt there will be many honest party members, workers, nonworkers, also militant and backward railway workers—all of whom will feel despondent, sorry, dejected. It is our task to tell these the real state of affairs, the fact that the battle has just begun, that the challenge has to be taken again because attacks will be coming. They should be told and convinced that such cowardice in the grim struggles, such panic at the first opportunity when the enemy was forced to use all his strength, is a sign of weakness.

We must frankly recognise that large sections of PMs are alien to all fighting traditions. They have alien conceptions of protracted struggles—dingdong battles. There are hundreds of PMs who have fought the most tenacious battles in the earlier years of the party, who have withstood goondaism of the Congress with all courage, who have seen many strike battles. Their fighting traditions must be revived.

The facile optimism born out of 18th-19th January events and the dejection born out of the 9th March are merely two sides of the same phenomenon. Patiently educate the ranks on this.

Your immediate tasks are as follows:

(1) Issue a manifesto to the railway workers on 9th March and after—no cause for despondency.

(2) Prepare for the coming battle—recognise TU work—outline tasks—how to link the mass with underground.

(3) Demand release of arrested workers. Take lead in it.

**P. S:** Among the causes explaining why there could not be action anywhere—must be mentioned the fact that in large parts we had not developed any railway workers' fighting spirit and traditions.

## **III**

# **Politbureau Documents on Bombay Hunger Strike**

### **I. RESOLUTION ON BOMBAY HUNGERSTRIKE**

The PB strongly censures G. Adhikari for surrendering to the strike-breaking pressure from the Nasik and Yeravda jails leadership in connection with the hunger-strike of Bombay detenus in May last. Adhikari by allowing himself to be overwhelmed by the developing funk in a section of the leadership, when the hungerstrike was entering a decisive stage, helped in the betrayal of the strike.

The PB strongly censures CC members D. S. Vaidya, S. V. Parulekar and L. K. Oak, who failed to fight against this betrayal, and allowed themselves to be overwhelmed by the cowardly advices from the jail leaders. The PB notes that Oak has treated his crime so lightly that he has not submitted any explanation or selfcriticism of his action. The PB gives a fortnight to Oak to submit his explanation, failing which the PB will recommend to the CC to expel him from the central and provincial committees of the party.

The PB gives a fortnight's time-limit to the members of the Bombay committee to individually submit their explanation regarding the reformist way in which the committee or its secretariat handled the hungerstrike. The PB does not want longwinded explanation. It wants to know whether the members of the Bombay committee

This resolution is dated 30 September 1949.

accept unreservedly the PB resolution and the document; and whether they admit their mistakes or not.

The PB congratulates the innumerable party members, the heroic sons of Bombay's working class on the brave and courageous way they conducted the hungerstrike. The PB sends its special greetings to those who like Arthur Road (prison) women comrades fought back the treachery of men like Sardar Jafri and defended party honour.

The PB salutes the memory of our Ahmedabad jail martyrs—our heroic brothers Jamnadas Mehta and Jayantilal Parekh and calls upon all party members in jail to fight back the slanderers who seek to belittle the heroism of our Ahmedabad comrades.

The PB strongly censures S. A. Dange for his activities and stand in relation to the various developments connected with the hungerstrike, all of whom have been detailed out in the PB note. The PB is of the opinion that Dange's stand amounted to open sabotage of the hungerstrike and that he betrayed the trust placed in him by the party congress when it elected him to the CC. The PB does not deem it necessary to go into details of his actions as they have been clearly analysed in the accompanying note.

The PB strongly censures Ajoy Ghosh and S. V. Ghate who along with Dange are guilty of cowardly funk in conducting the hungerstrike—and who along with Dange must be held primarily responsible for the debacle of the strike. Like Dange, Ghosh and Ghate have betrayed the trust placed in them by the second congress when it elected them to the CC.

The PB decides to submit the conduct of these comrades to the CC and ask the CC whether it considers further disciplinary action necessary. The PB however recommends to the CC that final action should be deferred for some time and these comrades be given an opportunity to make a selfcritical review of their mistakes.

The PB calls upon these comrades to study the tactical line documents very closely, apply them to their own con-



tion the Bombay government was trying to placate upperclass nonproletarian elements in the party and suppress the proletarian elements.

Thanks to this, workingclass leaders with two decades of service in the cause of the proletariat found themselves in class II while petty-bourgeois elements with academic qualifications found themselves in class I. The government retained with a vengeance the class distinction inside the jail and attempted to humiliate, insult the working class.

It is obvious that the CC members outside as well as inside were alien to this understanding. Their understanding was a reformist understanding—as it was a question of a few minor demands and not a question involving an entire class. They neither saw the government's attempt to attack and intimidate our class, nor did they see the insult to our own class. Years of reformism had made all of them alien to any sense of pride in the working class; had made them insensitive to any affront and insult to the working class; had made them such hardened reformists that they were prepared to accept and introduce class distinctions inside the party. Their refusal to see the class character of the offensive was nothing but a shamefaced acceptance of class distinction inside the party.

The elementary duty of every communist worth his salt, every communist loyal to the working class, was to defeat this class offensive, this attempt to intimidate the new militants from the working class, this attempt to force surrender of the militants by starving their wives and children. It was not a question of jail treatment in the ordinary sense, but of the freedom of workingclass struggle of the right to fight for the cause of the working class and communism without one's wife and children being starved as reprisals. It was a part of this freedom that the party demands for conducting the class war against the bourgeoisie.

It is obvious that no sacrifice will be too great, too much in this battle. If a communist is not capable of sacrificing

his utmost in such a cause, he must be declared to be incapable of fighting for anything worth fighting for. But what was the attitude of Yeravda jail CCMs?

When the government stopped forced feeding they got panicky, they worked themselves into a frenzy over the stopping of forced feeding and said this was a diabolical plot to kill them; they sent panicky letters outside to get somehow the hungerstrike withdrawn, and seek the intervention of N. M. Joshi, Shankarrao, More, anybody. 'Save us at all costs' was their slogan. Their importunate requests began to assume the form of ultimatums as time passed by and they were aided in this by Dange who sent similar ultimatums from Nasik jail.

During the course of last eighteen months party members in jails in all provinces have carried on several hungerstrikes. In all of these the ranks, 99 per cent of our party members, have fought heroically, courageously and the party is justly proud of them.

In these struggles there have been waverings and vacillations, but there has not yet been another instance of such open and gross cowardice and panic on the part of the leadership—as in the case of the Nasik and Yeravda jail CCMs.

What was the argument advanced by the CCMs in Yeravda jail in demanding withdrawal of the hungerstrike? They were not in a position to continue the hungerstrike without running the risk of death or being maimed. They were frightened at the prospect of death or even incapacitation—none of the CCMs was on strike. both it seems were exempted. They, supported by the jail committee perhaps, were of the opinion that the question of abolition of classification, of family allowances for the families of hundreds of workers, of defeating the intimidating game of the Congress government, of fighting the class discrimination against the working class was not worth sacrificing their precious lives, or even inviting physical incapacitation. Such was their faith in the cause

they were fighting for. Such was their respect for the working class; their anger against the treatment of workingclass detenus, their own comrades, members of the same party.

The refusal to risk life or physical injury is nothing but the announcement of open desertion of the class fight, open desertion by petty-bourgeois elements of the working class. This and nothing else is the class meaning of the cowardly withdrawal. The vacillations of the petty bourgeoisie are reflected inside the party leadership in jail, since the leadership is mostly composed of these elements.

The abolition of classification was not a demand impossible of achievement as is imagined by the leaders. The ranks in Bombay perhaps do not know that classification has been abolished in Bengal and Madras so far as detenus are concerned—a fact which ought to show to everybody that it is a demand easy of achievement provided sufficient fighting capacity and faith in the cause is there.

If the leaders of Yeravda and Nasik jails, if the CCMs, had decided to continue the strike never minding the consequences, if they had shown an uncompromising spirit from the beginning, and had not raised hope in the minds of the officials that the hungerstrike could be easily broken, they would have definitely won. If in the course of the struggle, whether successful or unsuccessful, there had been martyrs—they would have died in a cause worth dying for, a cause for which it is an honour and privilege to die—the cause of the working class.

But nothing was farther from the minds of the leadership at Nasik and Yeravda jails than the duty of sacrificing lives in this cause. From the beginning the leadership which mostly comes from class I—the privileged class—looked upon the fight as only the fight of class II. Dange openly puts it in so many words. The chits written by Ghosh from Yeravda jail also betray the same idea. Repeatedly in his chits Ghosh writes about growing numbers of class II prisoners giving up the strike—an emphasis which has no other meaning than this that those

for whom they were fighting are themselves giving up the strike; any further continuation is meaningless. Such was their attitude to the struggle.

Besides the argument of Yeravda jail leaders that because a number of class II prisoners were giving up hungerstrike, the strike should be withdrawn, was a false argument. It was false because it was the bounden duty of class I prisoners to continue the hungerstrike even if the entire class II prisoners had given up the strike. It was a joint struggle and continued resistance by class I would have counted, and would have rallied back the class II detenus.

Secondly the majority of class II prisoners were not in Yeravda jail and it was impermissible to demand withdrawal on the basis of vacillations among class II detenus in that jail.

Thirdly, practically the entire number of class II prisoners in Yeravda were, nonparty peasants who had hardly come into contact with the party, and they were bound to vacillate. To base oneself on the vacillations of this mass was to seek cover to hide one's own vacillations.

Fourthly, the majority of party ranks drawn from the working class were either in Nasik or Worli jails and Ghosh does not even remember them—though they constituted the majority of class II detenus.

Thus it will be seen that every excuse was sought to stage a retreat and justify it one way or the other.

It might be in other jails also there might have been vacillations among class II prisoners. This was natural since there was only a weak and hesitating lead from the beginning. But that is no reason why the CCMs should have vacillated. If they found vacillations growing they should have thrown themselves in the struggle. Both Ghosh and Ghate, though they were exempted in the beginning, should have joined the struggle when the decisive point had been reached.

The PB holds that the CCMs concerned showed petty-bourgeois funk when they were called upon to fight for

the working class; because of their alien class outlook the fight for the working class became unreal to them; they therefore lacked conviction and became panicky just when the struggle was reaching a decisive point, its climax.

The PB holds that the strike could have continued for many more days if the CCMs concerned had placed themselves at the head and given a decisive lead.

Following this, the Yeravda CCMs, unanimously supported by the jail committee, have come out most shamelessly in favour of nonresistance or formal passive resistance to the segregation move of the government. They reject the principle of militant forms of resistance in jail and proclaim the opportunist theory that in jails only hungerstrikes, or other forms of passive resistance—they call it defensive resistance—should be undertaken. To escape being charged with advocating nonviolent passive resistance out and out, they talk of resistance with bare fists etc., or with whatever might come into their hands. This is nothing but a conscience-saving clause. In the context of the fact that they reject as a matter of principle militant resistance and also preparation before hand for organising such resistance, their talk of resistance with bare fists etc. is only a plea for organised passive resistance and nothing else. In this they only ape the bourgeois leader Gandhiji who permitted women to resist with hands, allowed scratching with finger-nails and biting with teeth. Gandhiji was right in describing these forms of resistance as nonviolent for they constitute only symbolic resistance.

In their degenerate reformism the Yeravda CCMs advocate this thinly-veiled nonresistance and reject as a matter of principle militant resistance and all organised preparation for it.

That these comrades reject as a matter of principle any preparation for serious and militant resistance is clear from the following: "The form that we decided upon was one which can be called defensive resistance. This is, we would gather at one place, raise slogans and refuse to be separated and locked up. If they attacked us, we would defend

ourselves with bare fists, snatch away their lathis if we could, etc. But would not collect stones and sticks, hurl them at the police." It is unbelievable that such nauseating stuff should be written by two CCMs and should be supported by a number of PCM's in August 1949 when the party ranks and masses under party's leadership have waged heroic battles inside and outside the jails.

The Yeravda CCMs reject in principle any serious preparation for resistance to the police. Of course they seek to cover the cowardice of their policy by talking about snatching lathis of the police. It is easy to understand that those who reject as a matter of principle organisation of militant resistance will never succeed in snatching the lathis of the police.

The Yeravda CCMs further consider it absolutely essential that the police must first attack them before they could lift their little finger against them. This is how they argue: "The point is whether right from the beginning we should make a different plan—a plan of collecting stones etc., not allowing the police to come near our barracks by hurling them at them, not waiting for them to attack us but seize the initiative ourselves."

The Yeravda CCMs are afraid of seizing the initiative; they want the police to seize the initiative. This is the crux of their line. And for them the police attack begins not when the police begin to approach your barracks with lathis and rifles—but only when they start splitting your heads, when they have already entered your yard and carried the attack in your citadel: for them the attack starts when it is already half finished and you are at a complete disadvantage. This is the same theory as Joshi's who said, "Don't resist till the police start burning your houses and raping your women" i.e. when the police have finished you and your resistance. This is not a theory of any resistance but a proposal to liquidate all resistance and that too in a typical treacherous fifth-columnist manner.

The Yeravda CCMs do not realise that what they are advocating is treacherous sabotage of all resistance and

are only repeating Joshi's treacherous arguments in his notorious "Pol-Org Letter" of February 1947.

The Yeravda CCMs repudiate preparation for militant resistance and are opposed in principle to the very idea of militant resistance. They openly state that it is not possible in jail and should not be resorted to. They write: "We think that broadly speaking the two forms of struggle that can be adopted in jails are hungerstrike and demonstrations. About the former we need not say anything. It is accepted by all that this is one of the most important forms of jail struggle. About the latter, viz demonstrations, there are differences about the forms. We include all physical resistance in this category because no matter what methods we use ultimately the government force can and will overpower us unless our action has created such resistance against government outside that it abandons the particular policy which led to the action—say transfer. They are therefore in the nature of demonstrations.

"Now the question is—what should be the nature of these actions? Even after the most careful deliberations, we are definitely of the opinion that they should be of the nature of defensive resistance—not symbolic resistance of the type of satyagraha but defensive resistance to the utmost of our strength even if it leads to firing."

The bogus character of the defensive resistance advocated is already unmasked. The talk about firing or defensive resistance being different from satyagraha cannot be taken seriously. All that stands out is that there is to be no militant resistance.

To reach this reformist conclusion wrong arguments and conceptions about demonstrations are introduced. What do the Yeravda CCMs mean by describing all forms of struggles other than hungerstrike—including militant forms—as demonstrations? What they mean is that hungerstrike is the only real struggle which leads to success while every other form is just a token protest, the militant form leads only to being overpowered by the enemy. The word demonstration is not used here in the sense of a higher-

form of struggle leading to clash with the police and grim fighting; but in the Congress, bourgeois-liberal sense of a token or constitutional protest. The line of reasoning is this—all forms of struggle other than hungerstrike are not real struggles, but just token protests, and therefore too much repression in them, loss of life etc. should be avoided.

That this is the idea in calling everything else 'than hungerstrike demonstration is clear from the following, given in explanation of the characterisation of the forms as demonstration: "Ultimately the government forces can and will overpower us unless our action has created such resistance against government... They are therefore in the nature of demonstrations."

Thus the demarcating line between the hungerstrike and militant forms of resistance is this—that the latter is bound to be overpowered, therefore can never succeed, therefore wards militant forms of struggle. What the Yeravda CCMs have come forward with an unbridled apology for non-violent struggle—for hungerstrike as the sole weapon.

At the same time this is an openly defeatist attitude towards militant forms of struggle. What the Yeravda CCMs are advocating is nothing new. The entire bourgeois gentry in the days of their oppositional politics has taken the same attitude to all forms of violent resistance, whether inside or outside the jail. They had argued that this causes the struggle to collapse. It was nothing but a plea to abjure revolutionary methods of struggle.

It is besides untrue to suggest that militant forms of struggle meet only with defeat. This is what all reformists seek to make out. The Yeravda CCMs join the ranks of such reformists. It is not necessary to quote the international experience of mass struggles or our own experience in this connection. To refer to them is enough to expose the utterly reformist character of the arguments advanced, though they are supposedly advanced in connection with jail struggles only.

The experience of jail struggles itself shows that the Yeravda CCMs understand nothing about them. In Bengal



the militant resistance organised by the jail comrades, which led to barricading of barracks, fighting from inside the barracks and death of four comrades, did not lead to the prisoners being defeated—but to panic in the ranks of the government who had to come out with an assurance that the terms of the previous agreement will be implemented. Formally it appeared as if the prisoners were defeated, because the barracks were taken possession of by the police, but the reality was otherwise. And far from demoralising the prisoners, the clash made them more angry and they embarked upon another hungerstrike to demand inquiry into police firing. There was no one in Bengal to raise the slogan 'the police are seeking to exterminate us, let us therefore save ourselves'.

The Yeravda CCMs unconsciously compare the prolonged character of the hungerstrike with the shortlived character of militant forms of struggle and think that in the latter there is no chance of victory. No one has suggested that militant forms of resistance can be as protracted as a hungerstrike. That is why no one has suggested that it should be the sole weapon on all occasions. The proper attitude is that in the present revolutionary period and the mood of the masses, in the present stage of fight against the government, such resistance often is the only deterrent against the government, and helps to rouse our class, and unmask the government far more effectively, and warns the government not to continue its repressive attitude to the political prisoners. It is a deterrent because such resistance makes it clear to the government that its policy can be executed only through a deluge of blood, and the Nehru government dare not repeat blood-baths in jail without rousing the hatred of the people against itself and undermining its existence. This has been seen in the streets of Calcutta where literally we have won through sheer defiance of police firing, facing repeated police firing, and forcing the government to retreat. The Nehru government and its jail administration will be shaken provided our comrades have faith in themselves and the people.

Militant forms of resistance is thus concentrated resistance, the climax of resistance which unmasks the fascist face of the Nehru government, rouses the indignation of our people outside and steels the struggle inside. Its plan and organisation are incumbent on all revolutionaries. Obviously a lot of initiative and discretion will be with the committees on the spot to decide on which issues to resort to this form of struggle. From outside only such patent issues as transfer to concentration camps or segregation can be indicated. Obviously there will be many more issues which will necessitate the use of this form of struggle. The choice of issues, and of the forms of struggle, will generally remain with the committees on the spot. The party outside will not always be in a position to indicate which form of struggle is to be adopted in a specific case—except on such broad issues as transfer, segregation etc. Issues may crop up suddenly, developments may take place suddenly, necessitating immediate action. That is why though through frequent consultation the guidance of the party can be made available, yet there will be many occasions on which decisions will have to be taken on the spot. And these will be on correct lines only in so far as there is a complete repudiation of the opportunist line advocated by the Yeravda CCMs.

The PB cannot but take note of the fact that the document of Yeravda CCMs is not an ordinary document. It attempts to sit in judgment in the heroic struggles carried on in other jails, belittles, in typical reformist fashion, the revolutionary importance of the Sabarmati jail struggle and puts forward a line which in effect asks the PB to repudiate all the militant fights carried on by our heroic comrades in jail.

This is what they write: "Till now it is the former type of resistance—that which we have called defensive resistance—that we thought the proper form of struggle. But reports of the clashes that have taken place in various jails have made us think over the whole question afresh. And we are giving you below our considered opinion—the

opinion of our committee." It is thus clear that they have sent their opportunist line as an alternative to the line adopted in other jails with which they do not agree.

Instead of feeling inspired by the resistance in other jails and examining their own opportunist practice, they sit in judgment over others, and blame them for not following their opportunist practice.

And they further slander the heroic Sabarmati comrades as follows: "The brutality of the firing at Sabarmati clearly shows that what the government is out to do is to physically exterminate or permanently incapacitate as many of our comrades as possible. And we feel that we should not adopt a form of struggle which facilitates the execution of this plan."

So the Sabarmati comrades are guilty of facilitating the execution of the enemy's plan. The same provocation theory of Joshi to slander all militant resistance, all those who defy death. It is on the same plane as Joshi's slander of Vayalar and Punnappa heroes. The PB condemns the comrades for indulging in these slanderous assertions which only show that they cannot even appreciate revolutionary fights—much less enact them.

This slanderous interpretation however is not accidental. This is in reality the essence of their criticism of all militant actions in jail. They want to denounce them as acts of provocation which only help the enemy. And this method of opposing revolutionary actions is not new. It is the Joshian method of presenting sabotage of the revolutionary movement as defence of the party. It is the Joshian theory of denouncing militant actions as provocative actions. The trick is done by concentrating attention on the acts of repression, by falsely presenting that through such repression the class enemy is getting stronger, the people are going down, and by concealing the heroism of those who fight, the basic causes—the desperate conditions, rising consciousness which make people fight and face death and screening the truth that it is the government, the class

enemy, that is getting isolated through such struggles and the masses and their party that get united, more determined. That the Yeravda jail committee should resurrect this nauseating theory of Joshi in August 1949 shows that they are deep in the mire of reformism.

This kind of reformism finds every excuse and uses every argument to shirk militant battles. It pretends to plead in the name of the safety of the party, safety of its cadres, in the name of avoiding too many losses. The Yeravda committee all the while avers that they are not afraid, that they are prepared for all eventualities, but in the end oppose militant struggle. At one place they oppose such action because they say there will be severe losses on our side, while the enemy will hardly suffer any loss, thus making it appear as if they are out for inflicting losses on the enemy. But this is mere pretence. They do not want to make any serious preparation, they refuse to do it and use the argument of unequal battle only to liquidate all militant resistance.

These comrades repeatedly aver that they are prepared to defend the honour of the party by risking death or physical injury. But their plea is that they should be shot down while offering nonviolent resistance. They write: "It is also very likely that they will shoot us down even when we do not collect stones and sticks, even when our resistance does not go beyond defending ourselves with bare hands and snatching away lathis. They who shoot down the women demonstrators at Calcutta may shoot down prisoners at the very first sign of resistance... Whenever they do that, we have to get hold of whatever we can get on the spot and hit back as best as we can. But that is not the same thing as collecting stones and brickbats beforehand, hurling them when the police approach our barrack etc., and thus make firing inevitable." This is a plea that at best we are prepared to be shot down without resistance, but not by offering resistance.

But even this pose of being prepared to die in non-violent resistance is a false pose. The nonviolent resistance

is suggested precisely to escape firing, escape death. They say militant forms make firing inevitable and hence they are opposed to it. Nonviolent forms make it, at most likely, and they may escape it. They themselves draw the dividing line between the two in this way—not by reference to the needs of the class struggle but by reference to what will inflict less injury on them.

That it is the fear of consequences that dominates the mind of the Yeravda committee is clear from the following. They write, "Barricades inside jail become veritable deathtraps and not a means of defence or offence when murderous fire is opened because you cannot retreat, you cannot manoeuvre, you cannot take shelter." It is difficult to understand what they mean by barricade fighting. No one has asked jail comrades to raise barricades in the jail maidan, or central square. The Bengal comrades barricaded their barracks, and perhaps their yards. They have not yet complained it was a death-trap. Those who want to fight find out the ways and means of doing it. And of course they choose the most advantageous ground that they can have.

But the reality is that these comrades want the party to sanction the hungerstrike as the method of struggle, and token demonstrations as auxiliary aids. They write, "We feel that the objects that we have in view—exposing the government and rousing the people against it, demonstrating our courage and determination and winning respect and admiration for the party—these objects can be realised by hungerstrikes and by the form of demonstration that we have proposed—a form of action that corresponds to our strength and to the situation inside the jails." Thus hungerstrike is proclaimed as the weapon and all militant resistance rejected. We at the same time know what type of hungerstrike the leaders conducted. It must be recorded at the same time that it is totally untrue to say that only hungerstrike and token demonstrations correspond to our strength and situation inside the jails. The most militant forms of resistance also correspond to our strength inside

the jail provided we have the courage to use it. No one has suggested that only militant forms correspond to our strength inside the jails. The Bengal comrades who faced militant battle against the police, subsequently resorted to hungerstrike also to enforce an impartial committee of inquiry into police firing.

The crux of the Yeravda line lies in this—at all costs devise that form of struggle which will guarantee against death or physical incapacitation. During the nonviolent hungerstrike, which according to them corresponds to their strength and situation in jail, they were not prepared to be maimed or to die and withdraw the hungerstrike in panic.

And now when the question of militant forms comes they again reject them by saying that they make firing inevitable, they are death-traps, they lead to loss of cadres.

It is obvious that though they repeatedly aver that they are prepared to die in the cause of the party, their real demand is neither death nor injury in nonviolent or violent struggle. The PB rejects their line of argument as opportunist and counterrevolutionary, as sabotage of all resistance.

The Yeravda committee wants the PB to lay down the form of struggles in jail today. It is significant that the request comes from Yeravda only. Comrades in a number of jails have understood the party line correctly without a special reference to the PB and offered militant resistance on their own on several occasions. Comrades in Bengal, Cawnpore, Vellore, Cuddalore, Sabarmati jails acted correctly in offering the resistance that they did.

The guiding line of the PB should be clear beyond doubt from what is stated in criticism of the Yeravda document. The PB further adds that the situation is such that even the most militant forms of struggle are often necessary and justified. They often constitute the only weapon to force the enemy to retreat and defeat his offensive. Any-

one who rejects them as a matter of principle or continues to repudiate them in practice while professing loyalty to them in principle has no place inside the party.

At the same time it is obvious that the militant resistance, climaxing the resistance of the prisoners, cannot be resorted to every day. Therefore the other forms of struggle like hungerstrike etc. are not obsolete, but are still valuable. The opportunist tendency to reject militant resistance and stick to hungerstrike alone should be consciously fought.

If the Yeravda comrades change their understanding completely they will find no difficulty in making the choice of forms according to the situation. They themselves will come to the conclusion that on such matters as transfer to concentration camps or segregation—the militant forms are necessary and justified.

The PB further wishes to impress on the Yeravda and other leaders that their cowardly conduct of the hungerstrike has emboldened the enemy and made him confident that the communists can be made to quail before death and repression. The fact that the brutal firing in Sabarmati jail only creates in the committee members the feeling that we must have adopted wrong forms of struggle shows demoralisation before repression and panic. It shows that unless the committee completely repudiates its reformist outlook, the game of Morarji & Co to intimidate the prisoners will succeed.

Thanks to the cowardly conduct of the hungerstrike and the persistence of reformist outlook, the struggle of political prisoners in Bombay is already put in danger. When resistance is organised again it is bound to be met with ferocious violence, for the enemy hopes to secure a swift victory over the prisoners. Brutal firing as in Sabarmati jail may be enacted again. An insane bourgeoisie, when it hopes to secure quick victory may go to any extent. However the repression can be beaten back if the members walk into the battle with determination and remove

the handicaps that the leadership has created through its surrenderist policy. The PB holds no rosy prospects. It warns however against losing morale and interpreting repression and death as the enemy's victory.

The PB warns the Yeravda and other leaders that the way in which they conducted the hungerstrike gave a setback to the struggle of politicals all over India, emboldening the enemy and creating hopes that more repression would force the surrender of communists. Against this the comrades in other provinces are heroically fighting. The enemy is constantly probing for weak spots and wants to take advantage of every weakness in our ranks, every chink in our armour. The heroic and prolonged resistance of our comrades in jails has discredited the government both at home and abroad and it seeks to silence the voice of the political prisoners in every way.

The government did not expect such widespread flare-up and prolonged fights in jail. This opening of a new front against the government threw them in panic. They knew their own weak position in dealing with this front. Though the bourgeois press may blackout all news about politicals, repression against prisoners gets known and discredits the government. The fact that the government resorts to open lies in its statements on hungerstrikes shows that it is afraid even of the petty-bourgeois public opinion which is very sensitive to ill-treatment of politicals. The fact that governments make concessions to the politicals and at the same time declare that no concessions were made shows that they are afraid of owning defeat lest it might lead to struggles elsewhere.

The struggle of political prisoners is an important part of the struggle against the Nehru government. The government is vulnerable on this front. At such a time weakness in our ranks, and lack of confidence, persistence of reformism, constitute heinous crimes amounting to strike-breaking and joining the enemy.

Continuing their opportunist line the Yeravda CCMs, supported by the jail committee, reach the lowest depth of



reformism in their letter, which is in reply to a circular sent by the CCMs in Bombay.

The circular from outside drew the attention of the jail comrades to the fact that the government was transferring class II detenues to Nasik jail to completely segregate them and the preparation for transferring them to detention camp outside the province.

The circular calls on all detenues to resist such transfer and asks them to follow up the glorious traditions set by our comrades in West Bengal, Vellore and Salem. It asks them to fight with every weapon that they can secure and make proper preparation for such a fight.

The circular puts the issue very mildly. It calls upon the jail comrades to do the most obvious thing, to resist in the same way as comrades elsewhere have done. It specifically states that the government's move is directed specially against the worker and peasant prisoners, that it is a class measure.

None except one who is completely alien to all sense of class feeling and class pride will fail to realise the importance of fight at all costs on this issue. None except one who has developed blue funk at the prospect of a grim struggle will object to following in the tradition of the West Bengal comrades, or preparing for the battle in the way indicated.

The Yeravda CCMs and jail committee members have covered themselves with disgrace by violently objecting to the circular and direction on principle and have betrayed the fact that they are not only ideologically confused but get frightened at the prospect of offering any serious resistance in jail.

In this letter they repeat all the nauseating arguments of the earlier arguments and add a few more bogus and opportunist arguments thoroughly unworthy of serious revolutionaries.

Without the least sense of shame they repeat the slander about Sabarmati and have the effrontery to state that the happenings since Sabarmati have further strengthened

their views. Demanding all abandonment of the struggle against segregation, against the open discrimination against the workingclass prisoners and slandering the Sabarmati struggle, these petty-bourgeois leaders write: "The real issue which led to the clash at Sabarmati—the plan of Deoli—has not come at all before public because the clash took place on the issue of transfer to Yeravda. Similar clashes in other jails on the same issue i.e. transfer to jails within the province will not lead to any better result, will not help to bring the issue of Deoli to the forefront. Precious lives will be lost, scores of comrades will be maimed and incapacitated for life—that is precisely what the government wants while the real issue remains hidden from the public eye. It is not merely a question of demonstrating that communists can face death, it is also a question of focusing attention on the specific issue of Deoli or transfer outside the province. And this will not be helped by the course of action given in the letter."

Once more the same fear about death and being maimed, though this time this fear is attempted to be screened by repeated references to the necessity of bringing the issue before the public.

Secondly, it is nothing but a barefaced lie to suggest that all that Sabarmati has achieved is loss of precious lives. It is obvious that the CCMs in Yeravda are not only not inspired by the Sabarmati heroism but have got frightened. But all honest party members everywhere, in jail or outside, all those near the party who have heard the heroic story of Sabarmati, and all those honest people who have come to know about the story despite the press blackout have become indignant and the party ranks and party following have become steeled in their resolve to fight the Nehru government.

The Sabarmati struggle has also unmasked the brutality of the Nehru government and made the government waver, just as it did in Bengal after the shootings in streets and jail. The Sabarmati comrades through their martyrdom have rescued the prestige of the party which was so cheap-

ly sold by the Yeravda CCMs in the last hungerstrike.

The Sabarmati struggle has thus brought before the people a far more important issue than the transfer to Deoli—the brutality and fascist character of the government.

What are the Yeravda CCMs, supported by the jail committee, driving at? What they seek is to abjure all struggle against segregation, against concentration of class I and class II prisoners in different jails preparatory to transfer to places outside the province. This is how they put their demand in cold blood: "The direction to resist all transfers to Nasik and Yeravda on the plea that government is planning Deoli is one which takes no account of the issue that is there before the public nor the sentiments of the prisoners." If the Yeravda CCMs want to suggest that transfer to Deoli is a mere rumour spread by the party outside, if they have got reliable information that the government has no such intention, they should say so. Further they should also prove that the government has no intention of segregating the class II prisoners. If they prove this, then the question of transfer may be treated according to the decisions of each jail committee or the tastes of individuals.

In the absence of such a proof the refusal to fight against transfer is refusal to fight against segregation, against preparatory steps to transfer outside the province. In Bengal at least the government is making secret preparations to transfer the detenus to Buxa camp. The Bombay government must be making similar preparations—since it is all-India policy.

Under these circumstances not to fight in a militant way against segregational transfer or preparatory transfer—is nothing but open treachery and the Yeravda CCMs are advocating it. Their tactic is to postpone all struggle to the point at which its organisation becomes impossible.

Of course this time in typical Joshian manner sabotage is advocated in the name of making the issue clear to the people. They should remember one thing—the people are

not fools and they easily understand the fight against segregation, the fight against transfer to places outside the province. If the Sabarmati comrades had made transfer to Yeravda the only issue even that would have been understood by the people since it was one of the demands of the hungerstrike that the political prisoners should be kept within their districts.

In their desire to run away from militant struggles the Yeravda comrades go to ridiculous length, and declare that even if the government was forced to withdraw all plans of transfer to outside the province through militant resistance, this is not good enough. "We want to stress that even if after a series of jail clashes the government drops the idea of transfer to Deoli it will not have fully served our purpose. What we want to do is not merely to defeat the ordinance, we also want the people to see and recognise that it has been defeated. The government should not be able to argue afterwards that it never meant to transfer the Bombay prisoners to Deoli."

The Yeravda CCMs could have as well argued that the best way of demonstrating to the people that the government has been defeated on the question of Deoli was first to allow themselves to be transferred to Deoli and start the fight back. They would not have looked more ridiculous than what they do by advancing the present argument. The defeat of the government's plan of transfer to Deoli will not serve our purpose fully, if resistance starts at the preparatory stage when the authorities are transferring prisoners to one or two jails for purposes of transferring to Deoli; even if such resistance compels the government to abandon its plan because of sheer militancy of resistance of the prisoners, clashes and sacrifices of lives. Why? Because in abandoning its plan the government might come out with a communique saying it had no intention transferring anyone to Deoli and thus people will not see that the government is defeated. Such is their argument. The people however are far more politically conscious and intelligent than what the Yeravda CCMs concede. The

people if they see the government coming out with a communique after bloody clashes will draw their own conclusions and consider the government communique to be a lying communique, for the people know that communists do not sacrifice their lives for the mere pleasure of it. They take the Communist Party to be a serious revolutionary party and its members to be serious revolutionaries. The people will draw exactly the opposite conclusion. They will say that the government is defeated and is only saving face. The Yeravda CCMs are not political infants and they should understand that this and nothing else has been our own experience on similar occasions. But perhaps by people the Yeravda CCMs unconsciously mean the immediate followers of the bourgeoisie—and their periphery. They forget that people include workers, peasants, honest sections of petty bourgeoisie, all of whom will not fail to be stirred by the repeated fights, which cannot be concealed, and will draw the correct conclusions from a whitewashing communique.

Screening one's own reformism and cowardice by throwing the blame on the people and their lack of consciousness is an old Joshian trick and the Yeravda CCMs are guilty of repeating it. The ridiculous assertion that even if the government's plan is defeated it is not worth much is however not accidental. It is part of the reformist propaganda against militant forms of struggle, which the Yeravda CCMs want the party to abjure at all costs. Throughout the world the reformists attempt to shatter faith in militant forms in a number of ways. They propagate that adoption of militant forms of resistance means sure defeat; if this does not cut much ice they propagate that it may lead to success but you have to pay too heavy a price; you can achieve the same result through non-violent struggle; if this does not cut ice they state that the victory achieved through militant means is not worth much. The Yeravda CCMs adopt all these arguments as it suits them. Their only aim is to create lack of faith in militant resistance.

What is the master plan that they suggest in opposition to the instructions sent from outside? Do not resist segregational transfers—they include such transfers under the innocuous term transfer inside the province and screen (i) transfers of class II are more likely to be segregational than otherwise, (ii) resist only when after segregation is complete and orders for transfer to a prison outside the province or to a place like Karwar come, (iii) and then offer only passive resistance, "defensive resistance", but on no account militant resistance. Militant resistance was rejected as a matter of principle.

That this is nothing but the tactics of giving the enemy an easy victory, the tactics of deliberate sabotage of all resistance, is clear beyond doubt.

To throw dust in the eyes of others the Yeravda CCMs make an attempt to present their viewpoint under Marxist terminology. The kind of "Marxism" that they propound has however nothing to do with Marxism-Leninism.

In defence of their own opportunism they mock at the party outside, at its failure to mobilise the people, little imagining that perhaps outside also the same malady that has struck them might be responsible for the state of affairs.

They further fail to realise that others also might have failed to make a turn towards revolutionary line and methods of organisation and struggle, and therefore might be finding themselves unable to break through the difficulties of the period of illegality.

They wrongly charge that the letter sent from outside means that the form of struggle has no relation to the stage of the movement outside. They do this because in typical reformist manner they forget the revolutionary period, the happenings throughout India, the fight waged by their own comrades in jails in other provinces. They reduce the stage of the movement to mean the local happenings or lack of happenings in the city of Bombay and conveniently forget the struggle of Telangana, the

resistance in Kerala, Andhra, Tamilnadu, the repeated clashes in the streets of Calcutta, the glorious resistance in the villages of Bengal as in Midnapore where protracted battles are going on, the repeated attacks by peasant masses, peasant women, to rescue communist leaders from the clutches of the police. The letter of the Bombay CCMs gave the instruction in the background of this situation, and in the background of the revolutionary period. The Yeravda comrades, intent on opportunist practice at all costs, conveniently forget the revolutionary period that is leading to repeated clashes all over India including Maharashtra, the Erangaon shooting—and want to argue that only nonviolent resistance, sabotage of resistance, corresponds to the stage of movement outside. They only use the weakness of the Bombay and Maharashtra committees to suit their own purpose, and demand a ban on all militant resistance. And this is what they call using such forms of struggle as correspond to the stage of movement outside. In reality their demand is adjust the forms of struggle to the disorganisation and backwardness of certain party units and not to the advanced units of the party as a whole or to the mood of the fighting masses, or the stage of class struggle in the country.

In reality the Yeravda CCMs repudiate the existence of a revolutionary period and revolutionary happenings in the country. For having made the formulation that the form of struggle must correspond to stage of movement outside and conditions inside the jail, they demand that militant forms of struggle must be eschewed all over India—thus making it plain that in their opinion they do not correspond to the stage of the movement or conditions in jail anywhere in India. It is thus clear that they repudiate the revolutionary period, the revolutionary perspective and the fighting and revolutionary battles of Telangana. This is where their Marxism leads.

Besides it is an elementary error to attempt to deduce the stage of the movement from the failure or success of popular response to a specific issue. Organisational mis-

takes apart, there are several other factors which determine the response of the masses on specific issues. As the influence of the party advances and revolutionary consciousness grows, the response of the masses on vital and major issues will be more and more uniform. But even then the ups and downs are inevitable. To attempt to deduce the stage of the movement outside from the fact that no demonstration appeared before Arthur Road prison when the IGP visited the jail again, or from the fact that there could be no protest strike on 11 May is nothing but arrant nonsense.

Judged by this standard we should have liquidated Telangana long ago. What direct action could the party do in support of Telangana? What could it do except popularising and spreading its message and fighting the slanders? What active popular response could be created in support of Telangana? A protest strike, general strike? Could it be organised even today? In this state of popular response would we have been justified in liquidating resistance, saying Telangana does not correspond to the all-India stage of the movement? It would have been the grossest act of betrayal.

Telangana fights on and continues to inspire thousands of workingclass and peasant fighters. And though they are not able to organise actions directly in support of Telangana, they start their own fights against the common enemy and help Telangana. Who will deny that the Calcutta masses have hardly done anything direct to support Telangana? And yet who will deny that their own repeated fights and clashes have helped Telangana and reflect the same revolutionary mood heading towards climax? No one will be justified in saying that since on the issue of Telangana there could be no militant actions, neither Telangana nor militant actions correspond to the stage of the movement and should be abandoned. And yet this is what amounts to the line of Yeravda CCMs.

When thinking about the popular response our comrades seem to forget that they are fighting as communists, and



not as part of the bourgeois oppositional movement, and that they are fighting quite different forces than in the past, that organising popular response means in Bombay today—rallying mass support directly for communists against the Congress government, by overcoming the effective resistance of socialists who control key cadres in workingclass areas, and overcoming the press blackout.

If the Bombay committee had been free from reformist practice and organisational methods, if it had carried on its agitation correctly, if it had seized the advantage of the big rally on 1 May to announce the date of protest strike, if it had combined revolutionary organisational methods of work and if the Yeravda and other leaders had not withdrawn the strike precipitatedly in a panic—there is no doubt that there would have been big response. It must be remembered that not only the comrades outside failed the workers, but the leaders of the hungerstrike failed them by withdrawing the hungerstrike just when the situation was reaching a climax and the issue was being forced on the attention of the public. The Yeravda comrades criticise the comrades outside but forget their own role in creating the mess. And it is now their demand that the mess which they and the committees outside have created should be taken to be correctly representing the stage of the movement and forms of resistance should be adjusted to it.

The Yeravda CCMs besides have got a totally wrong idea about the relation between the jail struggle and popular movement and response outside. They fail to see the independent role and responsibility of the jail struggle in exposing the government, rousing the public and forcing a compromise and surrender on the government. No doubt the direct support from outside led by the party is a powerful weapon of inflicting defeat on the government, and of linking the struggle inside with the struggle outside. No doubt the struggle of political prisoners is a very important political struggle and party committees who fail to make a serious endeavour to mobilise support behind

it must be held guilty of sabotaging the struggle. The failure of the Bombay and Maharashtra committees to mobilise support was no doubt a serious affair. But the hungerstrike had a powerful weapon of appealing to the public, to the working class—their own hungerstrike—a weapon which would have forced the government sooner or later to sue for a compromise besides giving the party outside continuous opportunity to mobilise popular support. Of course all this could not be accomplished without the risk of maiming or death—and that was the rub.

The collapse of the plans outside put greater responsibilities on the leaders of the hungerstrike. They failed to rise to their responsibilities. They failed because they forgot the independent role of jail struggles to rouse the people, because they forgot the strength of jail struggles in forcing a compromise or surrender on the government, forgot that hungerstrike was a direct weapon of appealing to the public against the government.

They failed because they had a wrong reformist idea about the relation between the jail struggle and people outside. Their outlook amounts to considering that the struggle inside jail is purely symbolic, while the real fighting is to be done by the masses or the party outside, and that also to be done before anyone runs the risk of death or being maimed. They are importing the understanding of congressmen who carried on mock fights in jail, were supported by the oppositional press outside, resulting in petty compromises. This and nothing else emerges from the documents sent by the CCMs and the arguments advanced by them.

Further it must be stated that the overwhelmingly large number of our jail comrades have fought their battles without the advantage of street clashes, street demonstrations, etc. as in Calcutta. They have continued to rouse the people through their protests and sufferings, and generally forced compromises or surrender on the government. Neither in Calcutta nor anywhere else the hungerstrike of our comrades or firing on them could be backed by a

general protest strike of workers. The lack of this support from the working class, or visible demonstrations in other provinces, was not made an excuse to withdraw the hungerstrike, and give up reliance on the strength of resistance from inside the jail. The comrades in places other than Calcutta had to fight under conditions different from Calcutta and they did not get unnerved. They correctly saw the independent strength and role of their hungerstrike and carried on their obligation to defend the rights of political prisoners and the prestige of the party.

The Yeravda CCMs thus forget the basic duty and role of the prisoners' fight, their own independent strength and want to reduce their fight to mere symbolic resistance, with the people doing the main fighting.

In support of their opportunist line the Yeravda comrades refer to Stalin and Lenin, though they refrain from citing any quotations and that is good. For they will not find a single quotation to justify their opportunist policy. Their argument briefly is this—fighting the jail battles through militant forms of struggle, which according to them do not correspond to the stage of the movement and which may not win the support of certain nonparty elements in Yeravda jail, is fighting the government with the party's own cadres, fighting with the vanguard alone. Hence it is not in conformity with the teachings of Lenin and Stalin. It would appear as if the party had asked these comrades to organise a revolution on their own in jail and establish political power. However no such absurd demand has been made. All that the party cadres have been asked is to resist in a militant way attempt to segregate workingclass prisoners and attempts to transfer them to detention camps. Who else but the party cadres in jail who form the overwhelming majority can fight this battle? And if certain nonparty elements do not join in this battle, how can the party pander to them and desert the fight? This is not leading nonparty elements but using them as an excuse to sabotage all struggles. The constant references to the Bahujan Samaj members only reveal that

the CCMs have given up all hope of winning these elements over, through action or agitation, and seek to use their vacillations to screen their own opportunism. A united front in which the party bases itself on the vacillations of its allies, and makes this vacillation the determining factor, and not the needs of the class struggle is not a united front but surrender to others in typical Joshian manner.

The theoretical position of the Yeravda CCMs is that we are the vanguard; and you cannot throw us into battle alone—for that is wrong according to Lenin and Stalin. It would have been good if the CCMs had taken care to study Lenin and produce quotations. This is what Lenin has to say on the relation between the vanguard and the masses:

"The main thing—not everything by a very long way, of course, but the main thing—has already been achieved in that the vanguard of the working class has been won over, in that it has ranged itself on the side of Soviet government against parliamentarism, on the side of the dictatorship of the proletariat against bourgeois democracy... The proletarian vanguard has been ideologically won over. That is the main thing. Without it not even the first step towards victory can be made. But it is still a fairly long way from victory. Victory cannot be won with the vanguard alone. To throw the vanguard alone into the decisive battle, before the whole class, before the broad masses have taken up a position either of direct support of the vanguard, or at least a benevolent neutrality towards it, and one in which they cannot possibly support the enemy..." (*"Left-wing" Communism*).

This should teach the Yeravda CCMs not to indulge in loose talk about vanguard being thrown into battle. Lenin here writes in connection with "seeking the forms of transition or approach to the proletarian revolution", and warns against throwing the vanguard alone into the decisive battle, i.e. battle for the seizure of power, without allowing the masses to catch up with the vanguard.

The warning is against a premature attempt to seize power, go in for a decisive battle on the strength of the fact that the proletarian vanguard has decided in favour of the soviets, but without waiting to give opportunity to the other sections to come to the same conclusion. This is something quite different from members of the Communist Party fighting against segregation etc. in jails. This much at least should be clear.

In reality, in the name of the false plea about the vanguard, the Yeravda comrades seek to evade all responsibility for struggles in jail. They seem to think that a vanguard is built of people who shirk fight; that personal heroism, courage, class pride apart from Marxian theory are not the requirements of the vanguard. Years of reformism have made certain sections put a premium on cowardice, and belittle the role of courageous and heroic resistance. Reformism has made many blind to the fact that a communist has to be personally a courageous person and be in the forefront of the struggles waged for the demands of the masses. If the logic of Yeravda comrades is accepted, every demonstration or meeting organised by party leaders or members will have to be given up when attacked by the police under the plea that the vanguard might be sacrificed. There is no doubt that the party tries and must try to save its cadres. But this is not done by sacrificing the class struggle, by sabotaging it, or running away from it. The way of the Yeravda comrades is this way. If these ways are adopted by the party outside, the party will be liquidated as a fighting organisation. Outside party members and cadres must lead the mass struggles openly or secretly. They get caught, or they get shot. New ranks take their place. The struggle marches on. At the same time every care is taken to maintain the hard core of party leaders and keep continuity of leadership. The vanguard role of the party is not achieved by wholesale running away from the battle, but by leading it despite difficulties.

Actually the line of the Yeravda comrades is abjuration

of the leading role of the party in the jail struggles in all respects. They abjure their leading role in relation to non-party elements, and instead of raising their consciousness and bringing it in line with the proletarian consciousness, they surrender their initiative to nonparty leaders. Instead of leading them in the struggle against segregation they accept their position and disorganise the struggle. In forms of struggle also they succumb to the backwardness of nonproletarian elements because they agree with them. Thus though they call themselves the vanguard there is no distinction between them and the nonparty elements. They seem to think that as vanguard their job is now to avoid all militant struggles and wait for the day of release to take leadership when they go out. Leadership does not come like this nor does a vanguard grow like this.

This is what Stalin has to say about the vanguard role of the party:

"Only a party which realises that it is the vanguard of the proletariat and is able to elevate the masses to the level of the class interests of the proletariat (emphasis added), only such a party can divert the working class from the path of trade unionism and convert it into an independent political force" (*Foundation of Leninism*).

Stalin quotes Lenin:

"... to forget the constant duty of the vanguard to raise ever wider strata to this most advanced level, means merely to deceive oneself, to shut one's eyes to the immensity of our tasks and to narrow down these tasks."

The Yeravda comrades are certainly not leading the nonparty elements but forgetting the task to raise them to the advanced level, and are following them.

It is characteristic of their opportunism that they make so much of the nonparty elements and forget that the party members and party following constitute the overwhelming majority in Bombay jails and that this logically follows the fact that the party is the real opposing force, the revolutionary force opposition to the government. At

such a time to act as if the party was a small and negligible force in the united front, to import reactions, ways and methods of a period when the party was a small force in the opposition is nothing but rank opportunism and constitutes a special form of tailing behind nonproletarian classes. They forget the palpable fact that they are the majority in Bombay jails. They forget their own comrades, stalwart workingclass cadres who are in jail, and tune themselves to the consciousness of their nonproletarian allies. In their letters there is hardly any reference to the existence of proletarian prisoners in other jails, to our comrades, our workingclass cadres, to their needs, while there is reference at every step to the Bahujan Samajwadis. It almost appears as if not we are leading the Bahujan Samajwadis but they are leading us.

The revolting climax of this surrenderist policy was reached when the Yeravda leaders failed to organise a demonstration against the IGP—the butcher of Sabarmati. The way they have narrated this incident without any sense of shame, without the least selfcriticism, shows the utter degradation of their consciousness and lack of political selfrespect.

The IGP was coming to Yeravda after a hot reception at the hands of our comrades in Arthur Road prison. The superintendent cunningly called the nonparty leader Datta Deshmukh and got a promise from him that there would be no objection in our yard to the IGP's coming. Instead of repudiating this promise and immediately organising demonstration through slogans and every other means, the Yeravda CCMs seriously debated whether such repudiation would spoil our relation with Datta Deshmukh and decided that they would raise shouts only when he enters their yard but not when he enters the jail and tours the other parts of the jail. They were very solicitous about their relation with Datta Deshmukh but they forgot the hallowed memory of two of their comrades who had given their lives for the party. The upshot was the IGP did not enter the yard. He had a quiet tour

of the rest of the jail and went away. There was no demonstration against him, the superintendent seems to have fooled the Yeravda comrades, and the butcher of Jamnadas Mehta and Jayantilal Parekh went away without having to listen to a shout or slogan from the communist prisoners. This is their lead, their united front in action. They dared not honour the memory of their comrades. They did not start the demonstration as soon as the IGP entered the jail, out of deference to their relation with the nonparty group. There could not be a more shameful spectacle than this.

This once more shows that the Yeravda CCMs invent one excuse or another to postpone all resistance, somehow seeking to escape it.

No one suggests that there should not be understanding with other political groups or parties in jail. But it should not be another prison for our activities. Its result must be in conformity with our role as leaders, and our strength as the major force. And when it becomes necessary we must be prepared to act by ourselves, even if the others do not agree. If on the issue of the demonstration against the IGP, Datta Deshmukh would have broken away it would not have mattered. If people do not want to protest against the butchery of our comrades—and they get alienated because we protest—there is not much prospect of revolutionary activity in collaboration with them. It is also possible that they would have joined seeing our decisive mood and action.

In their attack on the circular letter the Yeravda comrades resort to the most spurious arguments. They attack the letter for not taking into consideration certain special features of the Yeravda situation. It is obvious that a letter written for jails can give directions by bearing in mind the common features. And it is the duty of every intelligent and honest party member to understand the directions in this light and not to use the special situation obtaining in this or that jail as a weapon of attack against directives from outside.



The special situation in Yeravda consists in the fact that the class II prisoners are mostly nonparty, not under the control of the party. Besides they are people who do not yet see the danger of detention camp and therefore will not resist segregational transfer. Some may even welcome transfer to Nasik.

Obviously here resistance could not be guaranteed. But if the Yeravda comrades had been serious about resistance they would have written to the comrades outside that their directives were correct, but it was difficult to fulfil them in view of the fact that class II consists of nonparty elements, but that they will agitate and propagate and do their best. If they had done this no one would have blamed them. But the Yeravda CCMs in their letter do not talk about agitation and organisation among the nonparty elements but go on stating that these elements cannot be won over and therefore the directives were absurd. Thus a simple issue is made into a big issue just to score a debating point over the instructions from outside. The Yeravda CCMs resort to quibbling and subterfuge in their attempt to discredit the circular letter of Bombay CCMs.

The PB totally rejects the opportunist line of the Yeravda CCMs and jail committee. The PB has dealt exhaustively with the documents because they are the most monstrous documents and practice in conformity with these documents is inconsistent with the membership of the party. The PB calls upon all the Yeravda members concerned to repudiate their reformist line, make a self-critical estimate of their mistakes and inform the PB whether they accept the PB documents unreservedly or not. The PB appoints two CCMs to examine the conduct of jail comrades against whom complaints have been made and take appropriate action. The PB also authorises them to call for reports on the behaviour during struggles of any other comrades and recommend if any steps should be taken to reorganise the jail committees.

The PB calls upon all party members in Yeravda and other places not to be panicky nor to be misled by panic-

mongers. It calls on them to hold high the proletarian banner of our party—the party whose members inside and outside jail are daily writing glorious pages in the history of the struggle for socialism.

## II. NOTE ON THE BOMBAY HUNGERSTRIKE

Hundreds of comrades in the Bombay jails showed commendable heroism during the last hungerstrike in May 1949. The party will always remain proud of them, especially of those who, even after three weeks of hungerstrike, were against the withdrawal of the strike.

Nevertheless the strike was conceived and carried on by the party leadership in Bombay jails in a cowardly and reformist manner—virtually surrendering to the enemy at the least threat of loss of life or physical incapacitation. The Bombay committee and the party leadership in Bombay showed a grossly reformist and panicky attitude in their advice to the jail comrades as well as in their efforts to rouse an agitation in support of the hungerstrikes. They lost faith in Bombay's masses, lost faith in the fighting traditions of party comrades, workers and peasants, and succumbed to the cowardly counsels of the leadership in the jails. The betrayal of the Bombay hungerstrike has resulted not only in a stiffening of the attitude of the local government towards political prisoners, but also of the Bombay example being used by the central government to encourage other provincial governments, like the West Bengal government, to go back on their promises to the prisoners and to adopt more and more brutal methods against prisoners.

Even in comparison with other provinces the treatment of political prisoners (detenus and convicts) in Bombay was the worst. The number of political prisoners ran to

This document is dated 25 September 1949.

hundreds and fresh additions were being made every day. Apart from the usual privations and tortures devised by the Congress regime to wreak vengeance on the fighting workers and peasants in jail, the government also sought to provoke division among the fighters by introducing class differentiation. The majority of the worker and peasant prisoners were placed in class II (detenus) or 'C' class (convicted prisoners) while prisoners from the middle and upper sections had a chance of being put in the upper class. Further they imprisoned without trial employed workingclass, peasant and petty-bourgeois fighters and then, by denying any family allowance to them, sought to use the consequent ruin of their families as a pressure to break their morale.

Obviously the main demand of a jail struggle, under these circumstances, would be to demand abolition of classification, uniform and better treatment for all detenus, allowance to detenus' families, release of all detenus, and better treatment to undertrial and convicted political prisoners. And anyone could see that in the given conditions of Bombay it had to be a very hard and determined struggle on the part of the prisoners to bend the government.

### *Weakness About Demands*

But the hungerstrike struggle having been conceived in petty reformist way for winning some minor concessions, if possible, this crucial nature of the demands was forgotten.

First, an attempt was made by many to give up, even before the hungerstrike began, the basic demands of the detenus too—namely those of abolition of classes and class I treatment to all detenus.

Comrades in jail, in their first memo to the government, had rightly demanded release or trial of detenus, abolition of class differentiation, class I for all detenus, family allowance, etc. But Nasik jail, which was one of the two

principal concentrations of our prisoners and as such the leader of the prisoners' struggle, submitted a memo subsequently in which they pleaded with the government to be true to their own standard of class differentiation! They pleaded, "Many of us have been workers, earning quite high wages and living a high standard of living possible under the conditions. Some of us have been middle-class people. And though the government says that our classification for treatment is governed by consideration of our education and outside mode of living, the government itself has violated its own norms in our case."

After this pleading they put forward ten demands for allowing rice, increasing quality of diet, separate kitchen, minimum clothing, some improvement in foodstuff and bath, covers for latrine pots, family allowance, etc. They did not make the demand for release or for abolition of classes and justified this by the cringing and brazen-faced statement:

"These demands (see above) are made on the presumption that the government insists on retaining class divisions in the treatment of political prisoners, while we insist that there should be no class differentiation in treatment of political prisoners."

So the demand for release, the fight for equal and better treatment to workingclass and peasant prisoners are unashamedly given up and a cringing appeal made to give some petty concessions within their own framework of arbitrary detention and inhuman treatment to worker and peasant prisoners.

The central leaders in Bombay had stressed to all prisoners in a letter that the impending fight was for the basic demands of all detenus in all places in the provinces. These demands are—abolition of classes, family allowance, etc. They had reminded that "the main thing was to bear in mind the central demands and that it was struggle of the workingclass fighters".

But the class I prisoners of Nasik jail, led by S. A.

Dange, a CC member, sent a notice to the government after three days of hungerstrike in other jails and on the eve of their own hungerstrike in which, while they 'requested' the government to abolish class differentiation, yet they hedged it around with the statement:

"Pending such a change we express our solidarity with the demands of the class II prisoners, and demand that we be permitted free association with them."

So the struggle for release, for abolition of classification, for class I treatment to class II detenus was not the struggle of the class I prisoners of Nasik—they were to fight only to express solidarity with the class II prisoners and to be allowed to mix freely with them!

This desertion of the stand of a single fight of all the detenus for common demands and equal treatment is made more clear in the letter written by Dange to the prime minister of Bombay. It is astounding that Dange was not a signatory to the joint notice of hungerstrike but was allowed by the comrades to write separately to prime minister of Bombay. Be that as it may, in that letter which was foolishly circulated by the Bombay party leaders without any objection, Dange appealed to Kher:

"If you (i.e. Kher) compare what you give today to class I and II and what we got in Deoli camp, you will again find that under your regime we detenus are far worse than we or you were before.

"We are treated worse than regulation III detenus of old or class I and II detenus of 1941-45.

"In what essential matters are we worse off? By the Deoli settlement, both class I and II got a definite schedule of normal civilian clothes twice a year, including footwear and winter suits. The claim of family allowances for the needy was recognised and some got allowances. Each class managed its own kitchen to its liking and hence better cooking was possible. The quality and quantity of diet was changed.

"Let me state that within the limitations of rationing,

your government has not worsened class I diet from the old standard. But in all other matters for class I and II, your treatment has definitely fallen below.

"Even according to your philosophy what was just and supported by your guru in the Deoli strike, you refuse to support and supply to your opponents."

After writing a lot more of such stuff he concluded:

"The main point, therefore, that I wish to bring to your attention is that your system of treatment is worse than that of regulation III prisoners or the one that was agreed to and observed even in your case also after the Deoli camp strike.

"I need not catalogue all the demands of class I and II detenus in the matter of food, clothing and allowances. My purpose is to draw your attention to the fact that even former agreements are being violated, former standards of treatment are being worsened and hence in sheer self-defence we have to resort to the same old struggles of hungerstrikes..."

The demand for the abolition of the vicious system of classification is not even mentioned in Dange's letter, there is no indictment of the Congress ministry which has murdered communist prisoners in jail and which was even then looking on with callous indifference to the already two days' old hungerstrike of the detenus of all other jails in the province. Instead, there is only a pathetic appeal for observance of at least the old Deoli standards which automatically presumes class differentiation.

The vital importance of the demands is forgotten because the hungerstrike is not looked upon as a serious life-and-death struggle of the prisoners against the inhuman, anti-working-class laws of the ruling class regarding political prisoners—a struggle to be waged primarily by the prisoners themselves for their essential rights irrespective of the condition of the movement outside.

This outlook towards the demands, the cowardly efforts at whittling down the most essential demands in order to

be able to come to a quick compromise on the basis of trifling concessions and thereby avoid serious struggle—all these naturally caused vacillation from the very beginning of the strike and developed into a surrendering attitude quickly in course of it. As the struggle was not looked upon as a serious one no jail thought of reconstituting the jail committees or forming strike committees of tested workingclass fighters before the strike.

At Arthur Road prison quite a number of the men comrades deserted the struggle. Sardar Jafri, who took tea even on the fifth day of the strike, who like a government agent promised the jailor to help induce the girl comrades for accepting transfer on the 2nd—this Jafri even trotted out a theory in defence of his desertion. But the party cell there did not sharply rebuke or expose him, on the other hand, allowed him to break hungerstrike on the 8th on medical grounds.

At Sabarmati the class I comrades had previously alienated 68 railway strike prisoners by refusing to go on strike with them sometime before the 2nd. As a result they were unable to draw the railwaymen into the strike from the 2nd—but they covered up their own weakness and mistake by putting the blame on the railway workers and described them as in a 'demoralised mood'. The weakness of the unit resulted in some six comrades not only refusing to join the hungerstrike, but also in apologising and leaving the party.

At Thana seven comrades went on hungerstrike. But they gave up after eight days only. And even during these eight days they accepted 'medicine' from the jail doctor, which was nothing but half a seer of glucose daily. This was promptly taken advantage of by the government by broadcasting the fact and thereby discrediting the hungerstrike.

The behaviour of the comrades in Nasik jail led by Dange was the most cowardly and it was almost like a treacherous stab in the back to the struggle going on in other jails.

The facts about their attitude towards the demands have already been stated. The class I prisoners submitted a notice of hungerstrike separately from class II prisoners, expressing 'solidarity' with the demands of class II. This separate notice and feeling of solidarity only are clear enough expressions that class I detenus had taken class differentiation for granted.

All the jails including Nasik had been notified long ago to begin hungerstrike simultaneously on the 2nd. All jails except Nasik began it on the 2nd.

### *The Nasik Betrayal*

But Nasik leaders, under the guidance of Dange, treacherously let down their comrades. They did not begin strike on the 2nd. On the 5th when the hungerstrike elsewhere was three days' old they sent the before-mentioned notice to the government proposing to begin the hungerstrike next week. They also took pains to inform the government that those who were ill would not join the hungerstrike, implying thereby that the government need not have any immediate worry of rapid crisis or complication. They began their hungerstrike one full week after the others.

To deliberately delay the hungerstrike for full one week after all others had begun was sheer cowardice, fear of life, attempt to save one's skin, a gross betrayal of the general struggle.

They allowed slightly sick comrades to go out of the battle. General-body meetings of the comrades resolved to exempt Dange from the hungerstrike—though he is not known to have been suffering from any serious illness. Of course Dange dissuaded them from exempting him on account of 'political reasons' but agreed to 'observe medical limitations if his health threatened to take a serious turn'. It meant that the very leader of the struggle was allowed to run away at the first apprehension of being injured in the battle.



*Dange's Compromising Appeal*

With this outlook they naturally began to surrender from the very beginning. Within seven days fifteen broke down and some were allowed by the jail committee to break off. From the 14th the committee began writing panicky letters about all comrades 'feeling very weak'.

On the same day Dange, obviously with the approval of the committee, wrote another letter to the prime minister of Bombay in, which he excused the prime minister for his failure to give attention to Dange's previous letter by saying that the prime minister might have been debarred from doing so by his 'heavy preoccupations'. He also agreed that in the then 'mood of the government it would be too much to expect them to give an unbiased consideration to the problem' (of hungerstrike). And in the end he made the cowardly compromising appeal:

"I am quite prepared to let any impartial tribunal judge, after hearing class II and seeing their conditions, whether the minimum decencies and necessities they demand are reasonable or not and whether what exists today, for class II specially, conform to the notions of justice and humane standards that should be applicable even to the greatest sinners.

"PS: I mention class II specially, because the dominating consideration in the present hungerstrike has been the treatment of class II detenus."

In this letter written without even consulting his comrades in other jails, Dange not only openly defies the stand for abolition of classification, not only does he take for granted class differentiation, not only does he express naive faith in bourgeois impartial tribunals, he gives away the whole struggle itself by telling the government that he is prepared to let a tribunal judge the issue. What would one call the leader of a strike who, after, only seven days of a strike and, behind the back of the majority of the strikers, expressed his readiness to accept a tribunal?

In their letter received in Bombay on 16th they cynical-

ly ask the centre, "This hungerstrike is not 'unto death'? Or is it?"

They had pinned their faith on intermediaries like N. M. Joshi and now state in dismay, "The intermediaries like Joshi and others cannot pull much weight with this government. Our (Bombay) strength in this respect seems to be much less than in Bengal." In the heroic struggle of the Bengal prisoners and the mass movement roused in support of it—which forced the government to concede the demands—the Nasik comrades saw only the weight pulled by 'intermediaries like Joshi'. They did not see the grim determination of the prisoners who refused to budge until demands were conceded, they did not see the indignation of the people and the martyrdom of so many men and women comrades outside which made the government shake—they saw only the weight of the intermediaries. Pinning their faith not on their own grim determination to fight, nor on their class or the people, they lose all hope and advise a cowardly surrender within 12 days of the strike. And they justify this by the statement:

"Even before we started this action, we certainly did not believe that this government would come to any settlement with us."

### *Situation in Yeravda Jail*

At Yeravda the hungerstrike started with greater determination and discipline though it was wrong to have suggested exemption for all the girl comrades. The girl comrades rightly objected to this.

But here too the hungerstrike was not looked upon as a grim life-and-death struggle to be waged primarily by the detenus themselves and in a manner as to rouse among masses outside the strongest indignation against the government as also the highest respect for the death-defying courage and uncompromising stubbornness of the communists. A member of the PB, a CCM and most of the well-known leaders of Bombay's fearless working class were

there at Yeravda. It was expected that they would carry high the fighting traditions of their class.

But they quailed after 12 days of the struggle. Seeing that forced feeding had temporarily stopped and learning that orders have been passed not to force food till on the point of collapsing—they grew panicky at the possibility of permanent injury or death. Drawing attention to this possibility which, they said, seemed to be the diabolical plan of the government, they wrote:

"If the jail authorities continue this diabolical policy of not feeding we shall have to beat a retreat. To continue the struggle after 21st under these circumstances will mean that we shall run the risk of disabling our comrades permanently as well as the risk of the fizzling out of the strike action...

"...our retreat, if it becomes necessary, will have to be planned quite early...

"The proposal from Yeravda is as follows: If the present situation continues and it becomes necessary to retreat we should approach people like N. M. Joshi and More of the Workers' and Peasants' Party to address an appeal to the hungerstrikers on behalf of them and the detenu aid committee to give up the strike on the plea that now their case is taken up by the public outside and they would continue their agitation...

"We now think that on the 21st May itself telegrams from the detenu aid committee and if possible, from the civil liberties union, should reach all jails appealing to hungerstrikers to break the fast. This is imperative and absolutely essential, if we are to avoid disintegration, demoralisation and serious damage to the health of comrades."

On the 16th they repeat the information about government's vindictive attitude, report the defection of some strikers and write, "It is impossible to prolong even a day beyond 21st May" and that "the appeal to withdraw must

reach by 21st noon, latest. If possible it may come earlier, but not a day beyond the 21st in any case."

It is quite clear that questions of intensifying the struggle, of fighting back with even greater selfsacrifice and determination the diabolical plans of the government were nowhere in their mind. They, the leaders of the hungerstrike, had become frightened and from 14th onwards had been planning nothing but retreat.

### *The Way of Communists*

It is true that 20 days on hungerstrike is a torture. But when are communists afraid of struggle because of the pain involved? It is true that the movement outside, due to the reformist outlook of the leaders outside, had suffered a very temporary setback. But should that make communist fighters lose heart? Should a fight of the prisoners be dependent mainly on the response outside? Should it not be carried on by them, till at least a climax is reached? It is true that some were deserting the struggle. But how can the hard core of communist fighters be defeated or demoralised by the cowardice of a few traitors or vacillators?

There was certainly the danger of the stoppage of forced feeding and permanent injury or even death of a few. But a hungerstrike struggle always includes these possibilities and it is by defying them that the struggle reaches a climax and also rouses the biggest movement outside. While worker comrades, women comrades and others on hungerstrike in the Bengal jails resisted forced feeding with the last ounce of their energy and even suffered beatings in their exhausted condition—should our comrades at Yeravda have been frightened at the very prospect of the stoppage of forced feeding? While the sweeper comrade in Bombay was going smilingly to death in defence of his leaders, the hungerstriking prisoners, what would he have thought had he known that his leaders were

frightened at the possibility of a few deaths or permanent injury among themselves?

The cowardly compromising attitude of the jail leadership and the failure of the Bombay committee to renew the movement after the 8th had emboldened the government to hatch its diabolic plans to let a few collapse. The way to face it was to defy death and accept its challenge. The determined prolongation of the strike, despite one or two deaths which might occur, would have made Morarji shake, would have roused indignation outside to white heat and Morarji would have had to bend. From that day to now the government has certainly further advanced in brutality, but in the context of the situation of that time it would surely have had to sue for peace.

### *Struggle Inside Jails*

The treacheries and vacillation regarding hungerstrikes or any other form of struggle from inside jails arise from a number of wrong ideas, all of which basically derive from reformist outlook on life and struggle inside jails.

Some comrades think that once they reach the prisons, they are, for the time being, away from the class struggles in the country and can enjoy the period in rest and bookish education. The PB note to West Bengal jail comrades rightly warned against this reformist idea and pointed out:

"A communist whether in the factories, fields, streets, law courts or prisons, is always a stubborn fighter for the cause of the proletariat, its party and all the toiling people. He is an irreconcilable fighter against the oppressive ruling class and he is to carry forward the fight even inside the prison which is not a rest camp but another fighting front, the most difficult one."

But the reformist antistruggle outlook persists in diverse ways.

The general idea of the vacillators is: The vanguard and most important cadres of the movement are inside jails.

Such a picked body of men and women should not be exposed to the risk of death or disablement unless, simultaneously, there was huge upsurge or indignation outside to force the hands of the government. Of course some demonstrative resistance may be put up against jail conditions by means of hungerstrike or other defensive forms of action—but the whole thing would be dependent on outside action and the inside action should not lead to too much sacrifice of cadres.

They forget that jail is also a sector of the battlefield. The government adopts the policy of class differentiation, inflicting physical and mental torture and hardships etc. precisely to fight its own class war, to frighten, break or wreak vengeance on the ever-growing number of class-war prisoners and thereby to weaken the movement outside as well. The class-war prisoners have to fight this policy from inside the jails tooth and nail—no matter how much may be the response outside. Workers in one factory do not base their strike or fix its duration with an eye primarily on outside support. They fight mainly on their own strength, on their own capacity to hold out. Of course individuals may falter or the supreme sacrifice may have to be made by some, but the strength of the struggle would be determined by the capacity of the majority to continue it. The blue funk at the prospect of death or permanent injury is not worthy of communist cadres. Cadres outside and common toiling men and women are laying down their lives every day. There is no reason why cadres inside jails should have to be preserved in a different manner.

As class struggle outside grows acute, the Congress government gets more and more exposed and isolated, the more the government tries to increase its brutal offensive on the class-war prisoners. The recent ordinance about transfer outside home province, the nonfulfilment of agreements and the shooting down of prisoners inside jails make this absolutely clear. Against this a determined and running battle has to be waged, in the first instance, by the

prisoners themselves. Any reformist or vacillating attitude now would be betrayal of the working class and surrender to the class enemy.

### *Posthungerstrike Events*

Inspired by the glorious struggles of the prisoners in Bengal, Vellore and elsewhere there has been a growing realisation of this in Bombay too in recent days. Such are the preparations for demonstration at the time of the inspector-general of prison's visit at Yeravda, the militant demonstration against Nanjappa at Arthur Road prison and the deathless courage of the Sabarmati comrades—two of whom laid down lives in their fight against transfer intended for segregation of the classes.

Still there is considerable confusion and vacillation among jail comrades on the question of struggle and forms of struggle. The two CCMs at Yeravda and all their comrades have refused to accept any criticism of their failing during the last hungerstrike and have stated that they "consider it a false and irresponsible assertion that the withdrawal of hungerstrike was an act of cowardice".

Naturally with such an outlook, they still vacillate before every new struggle or new form of struggle. On the 9th August the central comrades at Bombay issued a circular to all jails giving the information that government intends to concentrate all class II detenues at Nasik and class I at Yeravda to break the unity of the prisoners, to separate worker and peasant prisoners from their leaders and also to prepare the ground for transfer to Deoli. For these reasons the circular gave the call for resisting transfer of detenues to different jails. It was against such transfer that the Sabarmati comrades fought with their blood. They did this even before receiving the circular—which shows how they learnt from the struggle of the West Bengal, Vellore Cuddalore comrades and how they connected correct revolutionary understanding of the government's policy with revolutionary heroism.

### *Persisting Weaknesses*

But the Yeravda comrades, led by a PBM and a CCM questioned the utility of the Sabarmati struggle. They opined that it was not wise to lose precious lives in resisting transfers unless it was definitely known to the people that they were being transferred to Karwar—which was not yet the case regarding Sabarmati transfer as the transfers were being made to Yeravda. They expressed the definite opinion that transfers inside the province should not be physically resisted, but protests may be made.

It is they themselves who inform in their letter that class II detenus were to be concentrated at Nasik and class I at Yeravda, probably as a prelude to transfer to Deoli. But this differentiation of the two classes, their segregation and division do not appear to be of any serious consequences—they are against resisting it. What is it except cowardly surrender to the government's policy of division and perpetuation of class differentiation? Their talk of resisting when attempt is to be made to transfer to Deoli becomes only a cover for screening their immediate surrender.

They write a lot about the issue of the fight not being clear to the people and on that basis condemn the action of the Sabarmati comrades. But would it not have been clear to the people if they had stated that they were fighting against the segregation of the two classes? Would it not have been clear to Bombay's working class if they had told them that their brother workers, who were leaders of their struggles, were going to be held permanently in class II and their strength of united struggle was also being sought to be disrupted? Would not the Bahujana Samajwadis—whose inability to understand the need for fighting transfers except to Delhi was held up as an excuse for not initiating struggle—would they not have understood this plain issue? And why must the overwhelming majority of the prisoners surrender tamely because of the weakness of a few?



It is the reformists who put off struggle till the last possible day on the plea of all being not prepared, public support having not yet been mobilised and so on and so forth. Our Yeravda comrades behave similarly.

### *Theory of 'Defensive Resistance'*

Even on the question of the nature of resistance, if and when it may be necessary in their opinion to resist, they advance Joshian arguments.

They say that even when physical resistance may be necessary this should be 'defensive resistance'. They explain defensive resistance in the following terms:

"We would gather at one place, raise slogans and refuse to be separated or locked up. If they attacked us, we would defend ourselves with bare fists, snatch away their lathis if we could etc. But we would not collect stones and sticks, hurl them at the police. Of course when a clash actually occurs and they behave with especial brutality it does become necessary to hit back with whatever you can lay your hands on in sheer selfdefence... But the point is whether right from the beginning we should make a different plan, a plan of collecting stones etc., not allowing the police to come near our barrack by hurling stones at them, not waiting for them to attack us but seize the initiative ourselves...

"...Inside the jail where you are inferior not merely in weapons but also in numbers and where moreover you cannot take shelter or manoeuvre, such action can have only one result—very severe loss to us and practically no loss to the enemy except a few scratches. The brutality of the firing at Sabarmati clearly shows that what the government is out to do is to physically exterminate or permanently incapacitate as many of our comrades as possible. And we feel that we should not adopt a form of struggle which facilitates the execution of this plan."

These prisoners must have heard how prisoners in West Bengal jails fought and gave away four precious lives.

Has that helped the government in its plan? No. That has still further isolated and exposed the government. They have heard how the Sabarmati comrades gave two lives in resisting transfer. Has that demoralised our people or party and strengthened the government? No. On the other hand that has whipped up new spirit in the party, caused greater indignation among people. None of this would have happened if the West Bengal and Sabarmati comrades had quailed at the threat of physical extermination or permanent injury. But the Yeravda comrades used this very threat for cowardly withdrawal of hungerstrike and now use it for avoiding militant resistance.

Hence they will not collect stones and sticks or hurl them or raise barricades which 'make firing inevitable', but will resist with bare fists *when attacked*—which is called 'defensive resistance'.

What is all this prattle about defensive resistance, making the issue clear to the people, etc.—except a stale repetition of P. C. Joshi's notorious 'Pol-Org Letter' where he suggested that the police who were attacking the kisans should be allowed to do their normal duty of search, arrest, etc. and resistance was to be offered only when they raped or burnt!

They object to collecting sticks and hurling stones on the plea that the form of resistance in jail should correspond to the form, stage and tempo of movement outside. Are the use of sticks and stones against the police unknown things outside? Must the throwing of stones inside jail against police attackers always wait till the movement outside in its support has started throwing stones? Are forms of struggle confined to the experiences of one locality or one jail?

These are absurd arguments. The essence of their outlook is: Delay the struggle as long as possible and put up minimum resistance. This is always the mode of operation of hardened reformists. It arises out of cowardice and denial of class struggle. It leads to surrender.

### *Comrade Dange's Conduct*

In conducting the hungerstrike and subsequently Dange's conduct has been the most reprehensible and the PB is bound to take note of it.

Apart from the weaknesses shown by Nasik comrades under Dange's leadership, which have been enumerated before, Dange has been guilty personally of grave weaknesses. He did not sign the joint notice of hungerstrike sent by Nasik comrades. He violated every principle of joint struggle by sending a separate memo to the prime minister of Bombay. In that he almost accepted class differentiation and pleaded for the restoration of old detenu standards and invoked in support the names of Gandhiji and Jayaprakash Narayan. Under his leadership the Nasik struggle started seven days after the others and constituted a stab in the back of others. It is reported that it was he who advised Nasik hungerstrikers to take lemon and sugar. He had the cheek to submit a bill to the party for Rs 175 which was spent for the cost of those lemons, etc. While the struggle was on he wrote another letter to the prime minister of Bombay in which he excused Kher for his callousness, whittled down the demand for abolition of class differentiation and, what is a graver offence, gave away the whole struggle by expressing his readiness to let a tribunal judge the issue.

He did not learn anything subsequently, or from the glorious struggle of the prisoners of West Bengal, Vellore and Cuddalore. According to Nasik jail committee:

"Kothawala (IGP) had a private talk with Dange when he had gone to Yeravda. Kothawala suggested that class I detenus be brought to Yeravda ... and class II be kept at Nasik. If this is done it would be better and easier for the jail administration to look after the detenus...

"Dange in his letter to the government suggested that instead of Yeravda, all class I detenus be brought to Nasik, climate and living conditions being better there than at Yeravda."

Dange has nothing to say against the government plans for segregating class II and class I prisoners, rather he seems to accept them. His only concern was to see that class I prisoners got the place where climate and living conditions were better.

### *Bombay Committee and Central Comrades at Bombay*

Detailed facts or review about the activities of the Bombay committee in leading the agitation in support of the hungerstrike struggle are not yet in our hands. However from what reports are available it is quite clear that they grew panicky, lost faith in the masses, looked upon the prisoners' struggle in a cowardly reformist way, succumbed to the cowardly pressure of the leadership in the jail and committed a number of mistakes which led to the failure of the struggle.

From May Day itself there was growing response in Bombay's working class to the call for support of the prisoners' struggle. This was shown by the large participation in meetings and demonstrations. But the slogan of a general strike in support of the prisoners does not seem to have been raised from the very beginning—it was kept off till a later date on the plea that otherwise Morarji Desai would come to know about it and unleash terror against the proposed strike.

Even concrete agitation about the condition of class II detenus, who came directly from Bombay's working class, was neglected. The Congress government was quick enough to take advantage of this weakness and sought to feel the people by broadcasting the facilities and 'luxuries' allowed to class I detenus. It was only after that, in the third week of the hungerstrike, that agitation was initiated on the basis of concrete facts about class II. But it was rather late at that time.

The absence of concrete agitation and the delay in popularising slogan of a general strike showed that the Bombay committee did not realise how hard a struggle

it was going to be, how brutal would be the preparations of the government no matter whether the strike slogan was kept secret for a few days or not—and that the only way to defeat them was to expose these very brutalities to the working class and rouse it for action against these. Instead of seeing this the Bombay committee depended, to a great extent, on spontaneous response to its call of strike etc.

Naturally, after the arrest of about 50 cadres in the demonstration of the 8th and intensification of police measures, the Bombay committee got almost completely cut off from the workers. Its strike call for the 11th was issued only through handbills, there was hardly any direct contact with and agitation among workers, let alone party comrades directly initiating strike action. Hence the strike was a failure.

At this stage it was necessary to regroup, reagitate and call for action again with the intensification of crisis in the condition of the hungerstrikers. A belated attempt at a signature campaign was made. But hardly any effort seems to have been put behind it. There was no attempt to hold smaller demonstrations—which would certainly have gathered bigger proportions when some crisis would be reached in the condition of detenus.

The reason for this was that after the 11th the Bombay committee lost all faith in Bombay's working class and grew panicky. L. K. Oak and S. Y. Kolhatkar of the Bombay committee proposed that the prisoners should be asked to give up hungerstrike or the mediation of N. M. Joshi should be sought to cover their retreat. It showed that they had the same reformist understanding of the prisoners' struggle as the jail leadership themselves had. They were equally rattled by the threat of some comrades dying or receiving permanent injury. They had even lost the self-respect of Bombay's fighting working class and advised grovelling before N. M. Joshi as a facesaving device.

The central comrades in Bombay rightly rejected this suggestion. But they themselves were a victim to the

idea. The pressure for withdrawal coming from Nasik and Yeravda also unnerved them. That is why even though rejecting the Bombay committee's suggestion in their letter, they themselves wrote in it, "To ask the comrades in jail to give up their hungerstrike at this juncture when it is possible for them to carry on for *another week*, when yet another big effort to rouse the workers and public can be made, would be sheer betrayal of a great struggle." That means, they too were frightened at the prospect of death, conceived of hungerstrike struggle as a mild demonstration which should not cause injury, but calculated that the prisoners might continue without serious injury for another week.

That is why the very next day they fell completely in line with the vacillators from jail and the vacillators of the Bombay committee. On 16th they sent a letter to the detenus saying that on 18th or 19th workers' and citizens' deputation will be sent to all jails requesting the detenus to give up fast and that the detenus should therefore carry on the hungerstrike for only *two days more*. At the same time they issued a circular to all units asking them to organise batches of comrades to go to Nasik and Yeravda to meet the leaders and informing all that in the given circumstances (of Morarji wanting some comrades to die of hungerstrike) "we may be called upon to advise our comrades to break the fast in time".

This means the Bombay committee and the central comrades at Bombay had agreed on surrender as early as the 16th and had even made this known to jail as well as to all party comrades and sympathisers. Thereby they had themselves killed every possibility of further agitation.

And, about the same time, the central comrades agreed to hectic running after N. M. Joshi and similar mediators, to the facesaving of the strike being called off on the citizens' committee of N. M. Joshi & Co. assuring the detenus to continue the fight for their cause.

And, to cap it all, the central comrades at Bombay misused the name of the PB and sent on the 19th a circular

to the jail comrades in the name of the PB—congratulating them for the 'unfaltering courage, grim steadfastness, exemplary solidarity and discipline' with which they all carried on the struggle and which was 'truly worthy of the great Communist Party'—and called upon all of them to terminate the hungerstrike immediately.

The same reformist understanding of the situation, and of struggles inside jail as shown by the jail leadership, and nonunderstanding of the struggle for political prisoners' demands as a part of the acute class struggle going on in the country—panic before the class enemy, surrender to capitulators within our ranks—these were the reasons that led to these serious mistakes on the part of the central comrades at Bombay.

# 1950

## I

### **Mighty Advance of the National Liberation Movement in the Colonial and Dependent Countries**

One of the outstanding features of the present international situation is the unprecedented scope of the revolutionary struggle of the peoples of the colonial and dependent countries.

In many countries this struggle is of an armed nature, with hundreds of millions of working people of the countries of the east taking part in it. The scale and nature of this struggle, led by the working class and the communist parties, show that the peoples of the colonial and dependent countries have resolutely taken the path of revolution against colonial slavery and for national liberation.

The mighty advance of the postwar revolutionary, liberation struggle in the independent and colonial countries

Editorial of *For a Lasting Peace, For a People's Democracy*, organ of the Information Bureau of Communist and Workers' Parties, 27 January 1950.



has shaken the entire system of world imperialism to its very foundations and shows that the colonial peoples refuse to live any longer in the old way, and the ruling classes in the metropolitan countries are unable any longer to rule them in the old way.

The great October socialist revolution released the revolutionary energy of the oppressed masses of the colonial countries, linked their struggle for freedom and national independence with the revolutionary struggle of the working people of all countries, thus opening the way to their liberation.

The Lenin-Stalin national policy, the victory of socialism in the USSR, which turned the formerly oppressed peoples of Russia's outlying regions into equal socialist nations who today make up the great fraternal family of Soviet peoples, give and continue to give a powerful impulse and support to the colonial and dependent peoples in their struggle against colonial and imperialist slavery.

The victorious people's liberation war against fascism, which the Soviet Union headed, the defeat of German and Japanese imperialism and also the fact that such colonial powers as Britain, France, Italy, Holland and Belgium have become considerably weaker—all furnished favourable conditions for struggle and for the victory of the national-liberation movement in the colonial and dependent countries.

The establishment of people's democratic power in the countries of Central and Southeastern Europe, the increased political and economic might of the USSR and the people's democracies, the resolute and consistent struggle of the democratic camp, headed by the USSR, against American and British imperialism—the main oppressor of the freedom of colonial peoples—weakened, and could not but weaken, the entire system of imperialism and thus rendered and continue to render decisive assistance to the colonial peoples in their struggle for national freedom and independence.

The world historic victory of the Chinese people over the combined forces of the reactionary Kuomintang and Ame-

rican imperialism is a striking proof of the advance of the national-liberation struggle, of the triumph of the Lenin-Stalin teaching concerning the strategy and tactics of the communist parties heading this struggle.

The victory of the Chinese people is of enormous significance in strengthening the national-liberation struggle in the colonial and dependent countries.

Analysing the conditions of the victory of the Chinese people's liberation revolution, Liu Shao-chi, vice-president of the World Federation of Trade Unions, in his speech to the Peking Trade Union Conference of the Countries of Asia and Oceania, stated: "The path taken by the Chinese people... is the path that should be taken by the people of many colonial and dependent countries in their struggle for national independence and people's democracy."

The experience of the victorious national-liberation struggle of the Chinese people teaches that the working class must unite with all classes, parties, groups and organisations willing to fight the imperialists and their hirelings and to form a broad, nationwide united front, headed by the working class and its vanguard—the communist party, the party equipped with the theory of Marxism-Leninism; the party that has mastered the art of revolutionary strategy and tactics; that breathes the spirit of revolutionary irreconcilability to enemies of the people, the spirit of proletarian organisation and discipline in the mass movement of the peoples.

A decisive condition for the victorious outcome of the national-liberation struggle is the formation, when the necessary internal conditions allow for it, of people's liberation armies under the leadership of the communist party.

As the example of China, Vietnam, Malaya and other countries show, armed struggle is now becoming the main form of the national-liberation movement in many colonial and dependent countries.

In Vietnam, the armed people have liberated 90 per cent of their country from the French imperialists. The 150,000 French troops in Vietnam are afraid to leave the occupied

towns, are bottled up by the armed forces of the Vietnam-republic.

In South Korea guerilla forces are making life intolerable for the police forces of the American-installed puppet, Syngman Rhee.

In Malaya, 120,000 British troops are bogged down in a fruitless endeavour to crush the Malayan people's national-liberation army. In the Philippines—the 'model' US colony—partisans are in the field against the puppet Quirino government.

In Indonesia, patriot forces are fighting against the combined Dutch and Hatta quisling troops. Half Burma is in the hands of the people's forces fighting against the British imperialist agency. The national-liberation movement in Latin America, Africa and the Near East is spreading far and wide.

The mass movement of the peoples in the colonies and semicolonies, the movement that unfolded after the war and developed into an armed struggle, forced the British imperialists to make a tactical retreat. A sham independence was bestowed on India. But the interests of British imperialism remain "sacred and inviolable". The Mountbattens have departed but British imperialism remains and octopus-like grips India in its bloody tentacles.

In these conditions, the task of the Indian communists, drawing on the experience of the national-liberation movement in China and other countries, is, naturally, to strengthen the alliance of the working class with all the peasantry, to fight for the introduction of the urgently-needed agrarian reform and—on the basis of the common struggle for freedom and national independence of their country, against the Anglo-American imperialists oppressing it and against the reactionary big bourgeoisie and feudal princes collaborating with them—to unite all classes, parties, groups and organisations willing to defend the national independence and freedom of India.

The victory of the revolution in China and the advance of the national-liberation struggle in the colonies have thrown the imperialists, who are desperately trying to re-

tain their grip on the colonies, into a fury. It would be a mistake to underestimate this feverish activity of the imperialists who are suffering defeat.

The communist parties, trade unions and all democratic organisations in the colonial and dependent countries should rally the working people and all progressive forces, daily expose the colonising plans of the foreign imperialists and the treacherous, anti-popular role of reaction which collaborates with the imperialists.

In the metropolitan countries, communists, whose duty it is to rally and unite the democratic forces in support of the colonial peoples, should remember Comrade Stalin's words: "No lasting victory is possible in colonial and dependent countries unless a real link is established between the movement for their liberation and the proletarian movement of the more advanced countries of the west."

Seamen, dockers and railwaymen in Marseilles, Saint Nazaire and other ports in France have, by their courageous action in refusing to handle munitions for the colonial war in Vietnam, set a splendid example of international workingclass solidarity.

The experience of the revolution in Russia, China and the people's democracies teaches that when a people resolutely goes into struggle, and when the communist parties are capable of heading this struggle, no forces of internal counterrevolution and of the foreign imperialists can crush the people's masses who have taken to revolution.

Fraternal bonds of solidarity are being forged between the working people of the west and the revolutionary peoples of the colonial and dependent countries. This solidarity of hundreds of millions of people is the rock on which imperialism will perish.

## II

### **Statement of the Polit-Bureau on the Editorial Article of the Organ of the Information Bureau on the National-Liberation Movement in the Colonies**

(The polit-bureau in issuing the statement given below to the ranks of the party has sent the following circular to all PCs:

You should study the *Lasting Peace* editorial of 27 January 1950 and the PB statement on the same carefully and express yourself on both the documents. The PB statement attempts to place the mistakes of the PB and at the same time carry forward the achievements made by the party. We are also sending herewith Balabushevich's article (PB document for all PMs—No 15) which will place the activities of the party correctly and will help in understanding the *Lasting Peace* editorial. The article is from *Problems of Economics*, No 8, Moscow. The PB will report on its mistakes to the CC which will take all steps necessary to implement the correctives. You should circulate both the *Lasting Peace* editorial as well as the PB statement to the ranks. You should also circulate this covering letter and wherever possible Balabushevich's article to the ranks.)

The editorial article on "Mighty Advance of the National-Liberation Movement in the Colonies and Dependent Countries" published in the organ of the information bu-

This statement was issued on 22 February 1950 as PB document No 14 for all party members.

reaw of the communist and workers' parties, *For a Lasting Peace, For a People's Democracy*, No 4 (64) dated 27 January 1950 is a brilliant contribution to the Indian people's struggle for national independence and people's democracy.

It is a correct lead to the Communist Party of India and a timely reminder that in its actual achievements it is *lagging behind* the immense possibilities of the rising tempo and sweep of the revolutionary struggles which the Indian people are waging against Anglo-American imperialists and their Indian collaborators for national liberation and against colonial slavery.

"One of the outstanding features of the present international situation", states the editorial article, "is the unprecedented scope of the revolutionary struggle of the peoples of colonial and dependent countries, which in many countries is of armed nature with hundreds of millions of working people of the countries of the east taking part in it."

This mighty advance of the postwar revolutionary liberation struggle of the colonies and semicolonies, which has shaken the entire system of world imperialism to its very foundations, has been opened up, as the editorial article points out, by the following major factors:

(1) The great October socialist revolution, the victory of socialism in the USSR and the Lenin-Stalin national policy which turned the former oppressed peoples into equal socialist nations.

(2) Victorious people's liberation war led by the USSR against fascism, the defeat of German and Japanese imperialism, and the weakening of such colonial powers as Britain, France, Italy, Holland and Belgium.

(3) The establishment of the people's democratic power in the countries of Central and Southeastern Europe.

(4) The resolute struggle of the democratic camp headed by the USSR against British and American imperialism—the main oppressors of the freedom of the colonial peoples.

(5) The world-historic victory of the Chinese people over the combined forces of the reactionary Kuomintang and American imperialism.

All these factors have weakened the entire system of imperialism and have created favourable conditions for the struggle and for the victory of the national-liberation movements in the colonial and dependent countries.

The editorial article is thus a sharp reminder to the Communist Party in India and in Pakistan of the great lag that exists between the mighty advancing forces in the entire colonial world led by their communist parties and the Indian people's liberation movement led by the Communist Party of India.

A tremendous responsibility rests upon the Communist Party of India to make up this lag. This is all the more urgent at the present moment when the British and American imperialists, with the active support of the Indian big bourgeoisie and other reactionaries, are desperately seeking to tighten their grip on our country, crushing the national independence and freedom of the peoples both in India and Pakistan, monopolising their vast material resources, to convert the entire country into a military base, to crush the national-liberation struggles in the countries of South-east Asia, in Malaya, Burma, Vietnam and Indonesia and to unleash a war against the Soviet Union, People's Democratic China and people's democracies of Central and Southeastern Europe.

"The victory of the revolution in China and the advance of the national-liberation struggles in the colonies", warns the editorial article, "have thrown the imperialists, who are desperately trying to retain their grip on the colonies, into a fury. It would be a mistake to underestimate this feverish activity of the imperialists, who are suffering defeat."

The resolute struggles which the working class, peasantry and other progressive forces such as the students, democratic youth and women are waging under the leadership of the Communist Party in the Indian Union and in Pakistan against the reactionary bloc of the imperialists, the big bourgeoisie, the feudal princes and the landlords; the fact that these struggles are rising to the pitch of armed clashes between the police and the people in many cities

and districts; the peasant partisan warfare developing in Telangana and in certain other parts of the country—all these indicate that the Indian proletariat and the Communist Party are rising to the level of the leader of the national-liberation struggle of the Indian people, and that conditions for the victory of this struggle for the rout of the Anglo-American imperialists and their Indian collaborators are maturing fast.

These developments point out that the lags that exist are not inevitable, that they can and must be removed. They can and must be removed by correctly applying the Lenin-Stalin teaching concerning the strategy and tactics of the communist parties heading the national-liberation struggles, which have registered a signal triumph in the world-historic victory of the Chinese people's liberation revolution.

In this respect, the editorial article has drawn the pointed attention of the Communist Party of India to the rich experience of the people's democratic revolution in China which was led by the Communist Party of China and its leader, Mao Tse-tung, to its final and irrevocable victory. The editorial article has emphasised that "the path taken by the Chinese people... is the path that should be taken by the people of many colonial and dependent countries in their struggle for national independence and people's democracy".

The editorial has sharply underlined two main lessons which the experiences of the victorious national-liberation struggle of the Chinese people teach us:

(1) "The working class must unite with all classes, parties, groups and organisations willing to fight the imperialists and their hirelings and to form a broad, nationwide front headed by the working class and its vanguard, the communist party, equipped with the theory of Marxism-Leninism; the party that has mastered the art of revolutionary strategy and tactics; that breathes the spirit of revolutionary irreconcilability to enemies of the people, the spirit of proletarian organisation and discipline in the mass movement of the peoples."



(2) "A decisive condition for the victorious outcome of the national-liberation struggle is the formation, when the necessary internal conditions allow for it, of people's liberation armies under the leadership of the communist party."

The polit-bureau shall reexamine all its resolutions, including the report on the strategy and tactics, in the light of these lessons and make comprehensive reviews and submit them to the central committee for confirmation and issue them to the ranks in the immediate future.

The second congress of the Communist Party of India was a great step in the life of the Indian Communist Party. The political thesis adopted by the congress laid down the basic programme and strategy and tactics of the people's democratic revolution in India. The political thesis advanced as the most important task in the new stage, the struggle for the consolidation by all means of the people's democratic front, which must be the embodiment of the alliance of the working class, the peasantry and the urban petty bourgeoisie under the leadership of the working class.

The congress became the starting point and a tremendous step forward in unleashing the forces of people's liberation struggles in Indian Union and Pakistan and for the strengthening of proletarian hegemony in the same.

The general secretary's report on the strategy and tactics adopted by the polit-bureau correctly applied on many points the line of the political thesis, and combated reformist influence inside the party, which was a hindrance in giving a bold leadership to the struggles of the workers and the toiling masses. This is testified by the fact that in the course of the last one year, the working class and the Communist Party have registered considerable successes in developing and heading struggles of workers, peasants and the oppressed petty bourgeoisie in many parts of the country in which tens of thousands have been mobilised.

But the Communist Party cannot rest satisfied with rousing and leading tens of thousands, at a time when under the stress of the deepening economic crisis, and

when the anger and the disillusionment of the people against the bourgeois servitors of imperialism are rising ever higher, the objective possibility exists of mobilising tens of millions of people belonging to all classes, parties and groups and organisations willing to fight imperialists and their hirelings, and uniting them in the revolutionary struggle for people's power.

This lag is explained by the fact that while fighting reformism, which acted as a brake on the unleashing and the bold leadership of the struggles of the workers and the toiling masses, the polit-bureau committed certain errors in dogmatist and sectarian directions, which restricted the scope of those struggles and prevented the mobilisation of the broadest masses in the same.

In combating the reformists who were retreating before repression and resiling from revolutionary struggle, the various resolutions of the polit-bureau, particularly the report on strategy and tactics, correctly emphasised that the countrywide offensive launched by the Congress government against the Communist Party and the democratic forces is a measure not of the strength of the reactionary camp but of its crisis, of its growing weakness and a sign of its impending collapse. We correctly pointed out the growing crisis of the capitalist order and underlined the revolutionary tempo and sweep which the struggles of the masses were assuming under the leadership of the proletariat and called for the unwavering and resolute leadership of these struggles by the communists. But in doing so we failed to bring out sharply the fact that the grant of fictitious independence in the form of dominion status has not changed the colonial character of the Indian economy in which the key positions still remain in the hands of foreign imperialists. As a result of this faulty understanding, the main stress was not laid on the fact that the character of the struggle still remained in the main anti-imperialist, antifeudal and national-liberationist. The task of dislodging of the national bourgeoisie from the leadership of the movement and its isolation, which constitutes one of the most important conditions for the hegemony of the work-

ing class in the national-liberation struggle, cannot be effectively carried out unless this basic fact is kept firmly in view.

In combating the reformists, who maintained that nothing has changed as a result of the Mountbatten award, the resolution of the polit-bureau correctly pointed out that the Nehru-Patel government representing the interests of the capitalists and landlords has gone over to imperialism, but we failed to underline the fact that in this sham independence, which we correctly unmasked, the interests of British imperialism remained "sacred and inviolable" and that "the Mountbattens had departed but British imperialism remains and octopus-like grips India in its bloody tentacles". This led to two serious errors:

*Firstly*, we described the national bourgeoisie as the leading force (most active fighting partner) in the imperialist-bourgeois-feudal combine; whereas imperialists constitute the leading force in the bloc composed of the imperialists and their Indian satellites. The Nehru-Patel government is carrying out the dictates of Anglo-American imperialists.

*Secondly*, the general secretary's report on strategy and tactics adopted by the polit-bureau failed to distinguish between the Indian big bourgeoisie and other sections of the bourgeoisie, to point out that it is the big bourgeoisie that is placed in the seat of power and collaborating with imperialists as their satellites.

In combating the reformist position, which advocated abjuration of struggle against the bourgeoisie of the less-developed nationalities, the resolutions of the polit-bureau correctly maintained that one of the essential conditions of victory of the Indian revolution is ruthless struggle against all shades of bourgeois nationalism, establishment of the unity of the workers and the toiling masses belonging to all nationalities in a common people's revolutionary front in the struggle against imperialism and its collaborators. But they failed to point out that various sections of the bourgeoisie, i.e. mainly belonging to undeveloped nationalities, can still at one time or another play the role

of "fellow-travellers" in the national-liberation struggle, that the working class can enter into temporary agreements on national-democratic issues with those sections of the bourgeoisie for common struggle against imperialism, feudalism and national big bourgeoisie representing predominantly the Gujarati and Marwari capitalists. At the same time we must bear in mind that under the present conditions of the extreme accentuation of the general crisis of capitalism, when a specially sharp polarisation of class forces is taking place, both on an international scale and within the bounds of every capitalist country individually, these oppositional strata of the Indian bourgeoisie ought not to be regarded in any way as reliable or stable members of the anti-imperialist camp.

In combating the reformist elements, who had been undermining the struggles of the agricultural workers and poor peasants in the interest of the rich peasants and refusing to tear off the former from the political influence of the latter, the polit-bureau resolution on the agrarian question and similar other documents correctly laid stress on the supreme importance of firmly relying on agricultural workers and the mass of the peasantry. It is as a result of this strategy that mighty agrarian struggles have developed under the leadership of the Communist Party in a number of provinces and districts. The aforementioned resolution of the polit-bureau, instead of emphasising the antifeudal character of the workers' and peasants' alliance, wrongly lumps the rich peasants with the landlords, describing the former as the spearhead of bourgeois-feudal reaction in the rural area. The resolution failed to point out that main slogans of the present stage of Indian revolution—abolition of landlordism without compensation and land to the tillers—correspond to the interests of the entire peasantry.

The aforementioned article of the organ of the information bureau has corrected this serious mistake by pointing out that "In these conditions, the task of the Indian communists, drawing on the experience of the national-liberation movement in China and other countries, is naturally

to strengthen the alliance of the working class with *all* the peasantry, to fight for the introduction of the urgently needed agrarian reforms..." (emphasis added). No doubt political influence of the rich peasants in the village must be fought, peasant masses weaned away from them and proletarian leadership and discipline established in the mass peasant movement. But in the interest of rallying the entire peasantry, for the struggle for the abolition of landlordism without compensation and for securing land to the tillers, which constituted the urgently-needed agrarian reform, and in the interest of strengthening the alliance of the working class and all the peasantry, such reforms as nationalisation of all land must not be advocated as an immediate demand and the slogan of expropriation of rich peasants must not be advanced, the trade-union movement must actively lend its support to the peasant movement. The Communist Party must organise the peasant masses into action for general as well as the partial democratic demands of the peasantry.

In applying the correct slogan of alliance of the working class and all the peasantry, reformists will distort its true meaning by preaching abjuration of partial struggles of the agricultural workers and sharecroppers on the ground that they endanger the interests of the rich peasants; such distortion must be combated in order to establish leadership of the working class over the peasant movement and to lend it a revolutionary character. Reformists will further distort the slogan to hinder the mass struggles of the peasantry on the ground that they will alienate the rich peasants. It is by fighting such deviations that peasant struggles have advanced and will advance.

The ideological root of the sectarian deviation of the polit-bureau on the agrarian question arises out of this: while development of capitalist relations in agriculture in India and the consequent class differentiation of the peasantry have been rightly pointed out, we have failed to see feudal landlordism as the dominant form of exploitation in the agrarian economy. It further arises out of the failure

to understand the anti-imperialist and national-liberationist character of the Indian peasant movement.

The understanding of the development of the capitalist relations in agriculture, growing within the framework of feudal property relations, and of the consequent growth of class differentiation in the ranks of the Indian peasantry enabled the party to recognise the very important role which the agricultural workers must play in developing the agrarian revolution and in drawing the broad masses of the peasantry in the revolutionary struggle for the abolition of landlordism. It enabled us to come out of the grooves of reformism and to swing the peasant movement towards militant struggles of the peasant masses for land and agricultural workers' strike struggles for higher wages, etc. But the failure to understand feudal landlordism as the dominant form of exploitation and the colonial character of Indian economy or, in other words, the failure to understand that the fight against imperialism and feudal landlordism constitute the basis of the community of interest of the entire peasantry have led to restricting the scope and sweep of peasant struggle on a countrywide scale.

The editorial article of the organ of the information bureau has correctly formulated our important task in the following words: "On the basis of the common struggle for freedom and national independence of the country, against the Anglo-American imperialists oppressing it and against the reactionary big bourgeois and feudal princes collaborating with them, to unite all classes, parties, groups and organisations willing to defend the national independence and freedom of India." The programme of people's democratic front set forth in the political thesis of the second party congress constitutes the basis of this broad joint front. Such a joint front must be obviously under the leadership of the working class and an ally of the international democratic anti-imperialist front led by the USSR.

In order to draw the broadest sections of the masses in the revolutionary struggles and to build the people's democratic front capable of ending the rule of the imperialists

and its Indian collaborators, we must emphasise the importance of the following cardinal tasks:

(1) The peace movement which has already begun with a broadbased character must be developed throughout the country along the line laid down in the resolution of the information bureau on the "Defence of Peace and the Struggle Against Warmongers". It must become the pivot of the entire activity of the party and the mass organisations. It is our duty to merge the struggle for national liberation with that for peace, tirelessly exposing the anti-national and treacherous policy of the Congress and League governments which have become direct lieutenants of British and American imperialists and are seeking to make India a base of war against the USSR, the people's democracies and the liberation struggle of the peoples of Asia.

(2) Ceaseless efforts must be made to unite the ranks of the working class by systematic exposure of the splitters like the leadership of the INTUC and the Socialist Party, by persistently explaining to the rank-and-file workers under reformist influence the significance of the cause of workingclass unity, by bringing the unorganised workers into the fold of the unions affiliated to AITUC, organising joint strike committees with all unions in defence of workingclass rights and interests, and by setting up broad-based rank-and-file mill committees, factory committees, etc. The Communist Party and the militant unions led by it must be in the forefront of all in mobilising the broadest masses of workers to fight for their immediate and most easily understood demands and thus help to establish permanent unity in the ranks of the proletariat. Unity of the working class is essential not only for the successful defence of its day-to-day interests but also for consolidating its leading and organising role in the people's liberation struggle.

(3) Systematic efforts must be made to develop the struggle of the agricultural workers for wages and land and to organise independent agricultural workers' unions. At the same time, it is of the utmost importance to remove the lag in giving a broadbased and all-India character to

the struggles of the peasants against the oppression of the feudal landlords and the police and for the seizure of land, which are developing under the revolutionary leadership of agricultural workers and proletarianised peasants and which are rising to the level of partisan warfare as in Telangana and other places. Drawing the broadest masses of the peasantry in the revolutionary struggle for land, for the abolition of landlordism will be possible only by resolutely fighting against the Congress and socialist leaders, the purveyors of the stupefying influence of Gandhism, who are seeking to draw away the peasant masses from revolutionary struggle and to disrupt the growing worker-peasant alliance in the countryside. The building of mass agricultural workers' unions, and of mass kisan sabhas, their coordination and guidance on an all-India plane, the isolation and exposure of the parallel kisan organisations that are sought to be formed by the Congress and socialist leaders are the most important tasks closely bound up with the developing revolutionary struggle of the peasantry under the leadership of the proletariat and the Communist Party.

(4) It is of the utmost importance to develop a broad-based struggle against the fascist repressive policy of the Congress rulers, the trampling of all democratic rights and liberties by them which is arousing anger and disillusionment among the wide sections of the people. For this purpose we must broaden the movement for the defence of civil liberties by bringing within its fold all parties, groups, organisations and individuals who are prepared to defend the civic rights and political liberties of the people.

The resolutions of the polit-bureau, correctly repudiating both reformist restriction of mass struggles into the confines of peaceful constitutionalism as well as petty-bourgeois revolutionism advocating so-called 'militant' actions without the participation of the masses, have rightly stressed upon the supreme importance of combining all reforms of struggle taking into account the unequal development of the movement of the masses in different parts of the country. These directives summed up the essence



of our experience of the countrywide struggles led by the Communist Party in different forms on different issues. Emphasising the essence of the experience of the Chinese revolution and the national-liberation struggle of other colonial countries, the editorial article has correctly pointed out that "A decisive condition for the victorious outcome of the national-liberation struggle is the formation, when the necessary internal conditions allow for it, of people's liberation armies."

The immense significance of the editorial article of the organ of the information bureau must be properly understood. The Anglo-American imperialists are preparing for war with feverish haste, to drown in blood the national-liberation movement of the Asian peoples. The Communist Party of India must play its historic role by mobilising millions of people against imperialism, for national independence and people's democracy.

The hatred and indignation of the people are rising high against the Congress government selling national independence to the imperialists and brutally suppressing the people at the orders of their imperialist masters. Armed clashes are taking place between its police and the people in many parts of the country. Partisan fighters are already active in the field in certain regions. The base of the imperialists is tottering.

By correct application of the tactical line contained in the editorial article, the Communist Party shall be able to be at the head of a nationwide struggle for real national independence and people's democracy.

By daily exposing the colonising plans of the imperialists at every step, by weaning away the masses from the influence of the Congress and the socialist leaders acting as the stooges of Anglo-American imperialists, by combining all forms of struggle and by mobilising all democratic forces, we will be able to remove the gap that exists between the national-liberation struggle of the Indian people and that of the other Southeast Asian countries. The patriotic call for national independence, peace and democracy has such a wide appeal that it is possible for the Communist

Party to mobilise the millions of working people and other democratic forces in India against the antinational reactionary bloc led by Anglo-American imperialists.

The Congress government is delivering cruel blows on the people's movement, on the working class and on the Communist Party to save the crumbling colonial order of the imperialist colonisers. But as the editorial article points out, "when a people resolutely goes into struggle and when the communist parties are capable of heading this struggle, no forces of internal counterrevolution and of the foreign imperialists can crush the people's masses who have taken to revolution".

The editorial article of the information bureau organ is a great contribution to the unification of party ranks. Since the second party congress the stubborn fight against reformism carried on by the entire party has played a great role in unifying the ranks and putting the party at the head of the fighting people. The editorial article of the information bureau strengthens that fight and at the same time corrects our sectarian deviation from the path of Marxism-Leninism. Armed with this weapon based upon the correct application of Lenin and Stalin teachings to fight against all alien trends, we must unify the entire party as a granite rock against imperialism and its Indian allies.

### **III**

## **Letter of the New Central Committee to All Party Members and Sympathisers**

The editorial of the organ of the Cominform bureau dated 27 January 1950 on the "Mighty Advance of the National-Liberation Movement in the Colonial and Dependent Countries" and the manifesto of the Trade Union Conference of Asian and Australasian Countries held at Peking, are historic documents which acted as a turning-point in the life of our party. They came at a time when our party, except in Telangana, Andhra and the hill border regions of Mymensingh district, was sunk in the mire of left-sectarianism, having run its full course in its reckless adventurist actions. They fell on fruitful soil because, on the one hand, the party ranks had seen the devastating effects of the left-sectarian adventurism of the polit bureau with their own eyes, though they did not know the way out of it and, on the other hand, the innerparty struggle was being conducted by the secretariat of the Andhra provincial committee (which includes a number of members of the central committee and two members of the polit bureau), however haltingly, since the second party congress against the left-sectarianism of the polit bureau. The entire party wakes up to the ringing calls of the Cominform bureau and the Peking conference to correct the political line and march forward. They unleash the political initiative of the party ranks so long bottled up both by right-reformism and left-sectarianism. Widespread and intense political discussions start for the first time in the

Document issued by the reconstituted central committee on 1 June 1950 after the central committee meeting of 20 May to 1 June 1950.

history of the party. The weapon of criticism and self-criticism is being wielded by the entire party for the first time in a big way.

In such a situation, the central committee elected at the second party congress met for the first time during the past two years and took important political and organisational decisions for enabling the party to get out of the present left-sectarian mire on to the path of armed struggle for national liberation and agrarian revolution, basing itself on the editorial of the Cominform bureau, manifesto of the Peking conference, and the articles of well-known Soviet leaders and academicians, such as Zhukov, Dyakov, Balabushevich, Maslennikov, and others, on the revolutionary movements in the colonies and semicolonies. No doubt the entire party ranks were kept in an atmosphere of tension and anxiety as to the future of our party because of the delay in putting before you the new political line. This could not be avoided by the central committee because of the unavoidable circumstances such as technical difficulties for arranging a meeting of the central committee members dispersed in the provinces under conditions of extreme illegality and the political confusion caused by the anti-Marxian ideas and methods injected surreptitiously by both right-reformism and left-sectarianism.

Comrades, the purpose of this letter is not to give you a full and detailed account of the central committee meeting, but to give you in short the main political and organisational decisions before the documents adopted by the central committee are finalised and sent to you. The documents will be sent to you one by one as they get ready. The central committee hopes this letter would allay your anxiety as to the future of our party.

### ***Trotskyite Political Line and Titoite-Turkish Methods of the Polit Bureau***

The second party congress gave a rude shakeup to right-reformism which had corroded every aspect of our party life and had eaten away the very vitals of it during the

long period of its grip over the party. The second party congress was "an important step in the life of the Communist Party of India and a big political event inside the country", as Balabushevich has stated in his article. The political thesis adopted at the second congress is a document which makes a genuine attempt to rescue the party from the mire of reformism in which it had been sunk for a long time. It restored the Leninist conception of the hegemony of the proletariat in the democratic revolution in a general way, and advanced the slogan and programme of the democratic front under proletarian leadership. But it also contains some dangerous roots of left-sectarianism which the polit bureau subsequently developed into a full-fledged trotskyite thesis, throwing overboard all the Lenin-Stalin teachings on imperialism and colonial revolutions and nullifying all the positive achievements of the second congress.

With the political impetus of the second congress, the party ranks dug up the classics, buried by right-reformism, and began to study them seriously. With the bright illumination of the classics of the great teachers and leaders—Marx-Engels-Lenin-Stalin—they began to grapple with the problems thrown up by the movement and understand and apply the decisions of the second party congress and the political thesis adopted by it. By the time the delegates reached their provinces, repression had already been let loose against the party in varying degrees. In Andhra, Kerala and Tamilnadu, the party already had to face white terror. In Bengal, the party had been banned immediately after the congress. The entire party cadre, dazed in the face of the fascist offensive, searched in vain in the political thesis to find out the ways and means to fight it back. Added to this, there was already confusion in the political thesis as regards the present stage and strategy of the Indian revolution, i.e. confusion between the democratic and socialist stages of the revolution and the roles of the different sections of the bourgeoisie and the rich peasants, etc. Comrades in different provinces began to grapple with the above important political and organisational problems.

In these attempts, the notable one is that of the Andhra secretariat which produced a draft note for discussion among party ranks and submitted it to the polit bureau for its approval. In spite of certain defects, it correctly defined the stage and strategy. It sharply brought out the nature of the civil war in which we are, and also pointed out how the question of armed resistance has now been placed on the agenda. It clearly placed the perspective of Chinese path before the entire party, i.e. the growth of revolution through bitter and prolonged armed resistance against the white terror in rural areas, combined with strikes and resistance of the working class in towns, leading to liberated areas in countryside and final capture of power.

The Bengal provincial committee secretariat too, though it had not gone to the fundamentals with regard to stage and strategy as the Andhra secretariat, had begun to grope towards the Chinese path under a different name of South-east Asia path and suggested flexible tactics on the trade-union front under the slogan of "hit and run" in its resolutions on democratic front and on trade-union struggles.

Assam comrades, faced with the realities in their own province, had also suggested in a general way the Chinese path and armed struggle in the rural areas.

The secretariat of the United Provinces provincial committee also had passed a resolution to conduct the agrarian struggle in Azamgarh district on the path of Telangana, giving detailed tactics of armed resistance.

The polit bureau, instead of carefully examining the political thesis in the light of the important articles appearing in the organ of the Cominform bureau and of other brother parties on the issues at controversy, (viz the resolution of the Cominform bureau on Yugoslav renegades, several articles on people's democracy, Alexeyev's article on India and Pakistan, Liu Shao-chi's article on proletarian internationalism and bourgeois nationalism, etc.) on the one hand, and life experience knocking on the head on the other, pursued a reckless path of dogmatism and adventurism. It produced a fullfledged trotskyite thesis of one-stage revolution in the form of the three documents—

"People's Democracy", "Agrarian Question" and "Tactical Line"—at its meeting held at the end of 1948, nullified all the correct things and developed fully all the wrong things in the political thesis, threw overboard all the teachings of Lenin and Stalin on imperialism and colonial revolutions, distorted Zhdanov's report, turned a blind eye to the valuable articles of the brother parties, and finally threw to the winds the principles of fraternal relations of the world communist brotherhood to the extent of open slander of Mao Tse-tung and the Chinese Communist Party. It should also be noted here that a good number of the members of the central committee outside jail were by that time itself well on the path of left-sectarianism and helped the polit bureau in its reckless venture. It is proved by the fact that their criticisms of the draft note of the Andhra secretariat on the question of stage and strategy were almost on the same lines as the above-mentioned polit bureau documents even before those documents had seen the light of day, though most of them had not commented on the other important problem of forms of struggle, i.e. Chinese path. This meeting of the polit bureau and the three documents it produced got the general approval of many members of the central committee and the provincial committees and acted as a green signal for the polit bureau to embark upon reckless adventurist tactics on all fronts.

The polit bureau embarked upon its adventurist line of action with a reckless call for an all-India railway strike on 9 March 1949, imagining an insurrectionary situation round the corner. It did not bother to take stock of the white terror with a cool head, or of the illusions of the railway workers in the socialist leaders, the lackeys of the Indian big bourgeoisie, of their organisational loyalties to the All India Railwaymen's Federation, and of the decrepit state of the party organisation, etc. This adventurist call ended in a fiasco exposing thoroughly the bankruptcy of the polit bureau and all its pretensions to Marxism-Leninism. The polit bureau, instead of taking lessons from this

fiasco, and coming forth frankly with selfcriticism, admitting its bankruptcy, chose the titoist organisational method of suppressing all criticism. The general secretary came out with an arrogant, abusive letter to the ranks and put the entire responsibility for this fiasco on the party ranks, by labelling them 'cowards', 'betrayers', 'funks' and 'saboteurs' on the one hand, and brandishing the 'rod of discipline' on the other, in order to suppress all criticism of the polit bureau's adventurist lead, thereby setting at nought every semblance of innerparty democracy. Of course this letter was accepted by some members of the polit bureau who were on the spot.

Thereafter the polit bureau, under the leadership of the general secretary, embarked upon the titoist path full-steam ahead—of suppressing all opposition, badgering members of the central committee into submission and disrupting, suppressing and dissolving provincial committees outright. It was successful in cowing down all members of the central committee and provincial committees who raised their voice against it with regard to the 9th March fiasco, except the Andhra provincial committee, which included three members of the central committee and a member of the polit bureau. If the polit bureau meeting held at the end of 1948 had acted as a green signal for the left-sectarian polit bureau to embark upon adventurist tactics on all fronts, the 9th March fiasco was the starting-point to run riot into titoist methods of organisation. If the members of the central committee and the provincial committees had stood up against this putschism of the polit bureau and discharged their elementary duty as responsible party leaders. 9th March would not have been a startingpoint for titoist-turkish methods in organisation but would have turned into the grave of left-sectarianism and the three "world-famous" documents of the polit bureau, and the party would have been saved from its present plight.

The polit bureau successfully subdued the members of the central committee and provincial committees who



raised their voice on the 9th March fiasco, embarked upon further adventurist calls and wholesale "reorganisation" of the provincial committees under the plea of eliminating the "reformist scum" who were supposed to have sabotaged "bold" strike-calls of the polit bureau, and of "proletarianising" the party. Of course this does not mean that there are no confirmed reformists in leading positions who have been sabotaging every strike or struggle and who need be chucked out, or that promoting suitable cadre directly coming from the proletariat and agricultural labour ought not to be undertaken. But it was certainly wrong and disruptive to remove wholesale those who had dared to raise their voice against the adventurist tactics of the polit bureau—both confirmed reformists as well as honest and capable comrades—from leading positions, and to promote cadres solely because of their proletarian origin to leading positions without training them and educating them, under the cover of apparently revolutionary slogans.

The fact to be noted is, the long history of our party proves that neither had right-reformism under the leadership of P. C. Joshi fought left-sectarianism, nor had left-sectarianism under the leadership of B. T. Ranadive really fought right-reformism; but both had fooled the ranks and the people with seemingly revolutionary slogans, one with the slogan of national unity for national independence and the other with the phrases: "hegemony of the proletariat" and "socialism"; one, with the slogan of functioning the party machine efficiently, had refused to promote proletarian cadres, and the other, under the plea of proletarianising the party, had removed honest and capable comrades from leading positions; thus both of them, in reality, had only fought the party. It is un-Marxian to say that one anti-Marxian deviation can be fought in reality with another anti-Marxian deviation. Both carry on a mock fight against each other as long as there is no correct line, but as soon as a correct line is put forward, both resort to attacking it from two opposite ends. This is the lesson the history of our party teaches us.

The titoite-turkish methods followed by the polit bureau after the 9th March fiasco had gone unchallenged—except for the lonely voice of the Andhra secretariat. They had run their full course and reached almost a climax by the time of the direct and open political intervention of the Cominform bureau.

The titoite-turkish methods of the polit bureau expressed themselves in the following forms:

(1) The polit bureau which is a body responsible to the central committee usurped the functions of the central committee itself. The central committee meeting was never convened. The members of the central committee were badgered into submission one by one—of course, some of the members of the central committee acted as "shock-troopers" in the "holy" task of the polit bureau.

(2) Even the polit bureau was not functioned properly. It was made into a two-man show in the beginning. Later it was reduced to a one-man show—the general secretary virtually arrogating to himself the entire functioning of the polit bureau.

(3) The polit bureau—mainly the general secretary—while refusing to make any selfcriticism themselves, extracted confessions in the name of selfcriticism from many comrades and provincial committees. This does not mean that all the charges levelled by the polit bureau against individuals and committees were wrong.

(4) The polit bureau, while refusing to learn from the ranks and masses, suppressed all innerparty democracy and discussions.

(5) The polit bureau adopted methods of favouritism and double-standards in dealing with the mistakes of comrades.

(6) The provincial committees which expressed opposition to the line pursued by the polit bureau were suppressed and dissolved. They were "recognised" with those whom the polit bureau considered fit to push through its antiparty line and methods.

The fractions—especially the students' fraction—were

pitted against the provincial committees, and were utilised as a sort of check upon the provincial committees. The fractions were sought to be raised to the status of fully centralised bodies independent of provincial committees and the provincial committees were sought to be reduced to the status of post-offices.

(7) The polit bureau refused to learn from the rich experiences of the brother parties, especially Mao Tse-tung and the Chinese Communist Party, under the plea of not accepting anybody except Marx-Engels-Lenin-Stalin. Not only that, while owing formal allegiance to the abovestated teachers and guides, it vulgarised and distorted their teachings to suit its own antiparty purposes.

The polit bureau resorted to open slander against the brother parties and their leaders and encouraged gossip-mongering against them.

Such have been the titoite-turkish organisational methods of the polit bureau—especially of the general secretary—inside the party for the last two years. Consequently, "the whole innerparty life" got poisoned. There was no frank expression of one's own views. The ranks, even the members of the central committee, were unable to participate in the innerparty life for fear of being dubbed "cowards", "betrayers", "saboteurs", "petty-bourgeois funk", and what not. So to say, a stinking barrack-like atmosphere of suspicion, intrigue and tension, of "sealed lips", prevailed inside the party till the editorial of the organ of the Cominform bureau appeared. This was ideal ground and fertile soil for the growth of disruptors, careerists and spies. The situation was much worse than it had been before the second party congress during the days of reformism.

The polit bureau's trotskvite-titoite left-sectarian policy and organisational methods brought the party to the verge of disruption. In spite of this, the agrarian struggle continued and expanded in Telangana, Andhra, and the hill border regions of Mymensingh, because the comrades there learning from life experience

and forced by it, bypassed the polit bureau's sectarian documents and marched forward. The left-sectarian polit bureau cannot lay claim to them just as right-reformism cannot do it for Telangana which had been started in the days of reformism. Both have done enough to restrict and sabotage them. It is to the credit of the comrades there that they could save these glorious struggles from both the demons and extend them in spite of innumerable obstacles set in the way by both "friends" and foes.

It is true that the titoist methods of the polit bureau had not yet reached the extreme form as in the Yugoslav party, but it was well on its way along that path. The political intervention of the Cominform bureau and the Peking conference at the eleventh hour saved the party and the mass movement from total disruption. The documents of the Soviet academicians on the colonial revolutions and the documents and speeches of the leaders of the Chinese Communist Party helped us to take a turn and chalk out broad lines of new strategy and tactics.

The seriousness of the situation facing the party could be judged by the fact that the general secretary in a letter to a member of the polit bureau "discovered" in the Peking manifesto "an atrocious formulation" in its calling upon "the working class to rally the national bourgeoisie" (i.e. middle bourgeoisie—CC) and saw a correction of it in the editorial of the Cominform bureau organ; the formal acceptance of the Cominform bureau editorial and the self-justificatory statement on it issued by the polit bureau to the party ranks go to prove the same conclusively.

Comrades: The remarkable political initiative and vigilance you have shown, for the first time in the history of the party, since the editorial of the Cominform bureau, the sharp criticism you have levelled against the selfjustificatory statement of the polit bureau and its antiparty titoist organisational methods, gave a rude shock to the polit bureau and enabled it to come out of its mire of bureaucracy and contempt for the cadre, its mood of com-

placency and selfjustification and brought it to its senses. It also made members of the central committee who were resisting to make a complete turn—some of them being more to the left than the polit bureau—wake up and think very seriously. Your political initiative, vigilance and sharp criticism of the polit bureau, along with the documents prepared by the Andhra members of the central committee and the rich experience of the Telangana and the Andhra agrarian armed struggle they had given—helped the central committee a great deal to make a complete turn and chalk out broad lines of new strategy and tactics of the Indian revolution as a basis for the unification of our party. This is a hopeful sign for the great future of our party.

#### *Political & Organisational Decision of the Old Central Committee*

It was in this background that the old central committee met and after serious political discussions, merciless criticism and selfcriticism, arrived at the following main political and organisational decisions unanimously.

(1) The central committee discussed the "Report on Left-Deviation inside the Communist Party of India" submitted by the members of the central committee from Andhra, amended it and adopted it.

It is an elaborate document containing the critique of "People's Democracy", "Agrarian Question", "Tactical Line" and other important documents of the polit bureau, which lays bare its bankrupt left-sectarian policies and their roots and delivers them a smashing blow. It also contains a broad assessment of the political thesis of the second party congress.

(2) The central committee discussed the documents "Main Features of the Indian People's Democratic Struggles and the Main Task of the Communist Party" and "People's Democracy" which had been prepared by the polit bureau after the editorial of the organ of the Cominform bureau, and found them unsatisfactory. The central

committee decided to redraft the document "Main Features" as a positive resolution, including the formulations of 'people's democracy' in the light of the discussions and amendments of the central committee, removing the critical part in it.

#### MAIN FORMULATIONS ON THE PRESENT SITUATION

This resolution is yet to be drafted. We are giving here very briefly the summary of the main formulations (excepting those on people's democracy) which will be covered by the resolution—at the same time dealing, in slightly greater detail, with some of those points which require clarification or are issues of controversy. They are as follows:

The historic victory of the people's forces, under Soviet leadership, in the antifascist world war; the tremendous weakening of imperialism on a world scale; the demarcation of the opposing world class forces into two camps—the imperialist antidemocratic camp led by the US imperialists and the anti-imperialist democratic camp led by the USSR; the growth and consolidation of people's democracies in Eastern Europe; the enormous strengthening of the Chinese democratic forces led by the Communist Party of China, which subsequently led to the total liberation of 475,000,000 people; the consequent undermining of imperialist authority in colonial and dependent countries and the deepening of the crisis of the colonial system as the most important component part of the general crisis of capitalism—all these have led not only to an increase in the sweep of the colonial people's national-liberation struggles, but also to its rise to new qualitative levels, viz that of armed struggle against imperialism and its native servitors in many of the colonial and dependent countries. And the factor of decisive importance in the national-liberation movements is that in the majority of the colonial countries, the working class and the Communist Party have emerged as the recognised leader of the national struggle.

The postwar revolutionary upsurge in India, the innu-

merable strikes and a number of general strikes, the great peasant struggles, the states' people's struggles, the mighty demonstrations all over the country, the RIN mutiny, strikes in the police and army units, the beginning of the Telangana armed struggle, etc., showed that the Indian liberation struggle had come to a qualitatively higher stage. And the determining factor in this stage was that the working class, led by the Communist Party, stood at the head of these struggles and that the Indian big bourgeoisie had finally betrayed the revolution and completely gone over to the camp of imperialism.

Unable, under these circumstances, to rule in the old way, British imperialism bestowed sham independence on India. Nevertheless India remained essentially a colony of Britain, with USA entering the scene more and more. After the Mountbatten partition both India and Pakistan remain dependent on British imperialism—economically, politically and militarily—with British capital increasing its dominating position in the economy of the two dominions.

### *The Big Bourgeoisie*

The Indian big bourgeoisie, which is closely linked with feudal elements and usurious capital and which from its very inception had been closely bound up with British imperialists, had not been capable of or inclined towards any kind of active struggle against imperialism. Though they had attempted in the past, through the leaders of the National Congress, to utilise the mass movement for gaining concessions for their own benefit their decisive and constant endeavour had been to prevent the mass struggle from growing into a struggle for the freedom of the masses and hence they had always come to a compromise with British imperialism and had reckoned on its support in their struggle against the proletariat and the toiling masses of India. If in the past they had represented some opposition against imperialism, then with the Mountbatten deal they completely and openly went over to the camp of im-

perialism. They have become the collaborators and servitors of imperialism, dreading the advancing tide of revolution.

Some conflicts of interest between imperialism and the big bourgeoisie do still remain or arise on occasions—though the bourgeoisie has not the independent status to 'solve them at governmental level'. 'The transfer of power', the change from the direct rule of the imperialists to indirect rule, has elevated the Indian big bourgeoisie to the role of junior partners of imperialism, exercising authority and repressive powers over the masses, united with the feudal and princely elements against the tide of popular advance, negotiating and manoeuvring within the camp of imperialism, not without conflicts of interests, with its own trading, military and expansionist ambitions in Asia, but essentially a secondary and dependent power within the camp of imperialism.

### *Tasks of the Communists*

In this colonial setup of presentday India, in the further advance of its national-liberation struggle, the tasks of the Indian communists are, as the editorial of the Cominform bureau organ has pointed out, to draw upon the experience of the national-liberation movements of China and other countries and "to strengthen the alliance of the working class with all the peasantry, to fight for the introduction of the urgently needed agrarian reform and on the basis of the common struggle for freedom and national independence of their country, against the Anglo-American imperialists oppressing it and against the reactionary big bourgeoisie and feudal princes collaborating with them—to unite all classes, parties, groups and organisations willing to defend the national independence and freedom of India."

The editorial has pointed out the enormous significance of the victory of the Chinese people against the combined forces of the reactionary Kuomintang and American imperialism to the national-liberation movement in the colonies



and dependencies like India. The editorial and the Peking manifesto of the Trade Union Conference of Asian and Australasian Countries have pointed out that the Chinese path is the path of struggle and victory for the national-liberation movement in India and other colonial countries.

On the Chinese path, the further advance of the Indian national-liberation struggle depends, essentially, on two things:

### *United Front of All Anti-Imperialist Classes*

First, to create a powerful united national front of the "broad masses of the peasantry and intellectuals, the petty bourgeoisie in the cities and the national bourgeoisie who suffer from vexations and restrictions imposed by imperialism and its lackeys"—to wage the struggle against imperialism and its native agents. This front has to be created under the leadership of the working class and its vanguard, the communist party, equipped with Marxism-Leninism, mastering revolutionary strategy and tactics, breathing the spirit of irreconcilability to enemies and the spirit of proletarian discipline and organisation.

In building the united national front, several points have to be kept in mind; viz

(i) The basis of the front is the alliance of the workers and toiling peasantry under the leadership of the working class.

### *Rich Peasantry & Middle Peasantry*

(ii) The rich peasantry who carry on feudal exploitation will have to be treated as the enemies of the front, though a distinction will be made between them and the landlords in the matter of expropriation of their land after the revolution.

Those rich peasants who do not carry on feudal exploitation will be allies.

The middle peasantry will be firm allies of the proletariat in the democratic revolution.

**Middle Bourgeoisie**

(iii) The big bourgeoisie are the monopolist groups, mainly Gujarati-Marwari—who are the agents of imperialism and who at the same time seek to dominate, in alliance with imperialism, the internal market by oppressing and exploiting the regions of other nationalities which are economically or culturally backward. The big bourgeoisie is the enemy of the front.

There are other sections of the bourgeoisie who, though not big by themselves, yet are intimately connected with feudal or big-bourgeois interests and hence are enemies of the democratic revolution.

The middle bourgeoisie are the nonmonopoly sections who are injured by the imperialist-big-bourgeois cut-throat competition and who have little or no links with the feudal forces. Hence they may be progressive to a certain extent. The middle bourgeoisie also includes the rising bourgeoisie of nationalities dominated or suppressed by the Gujarati-Marwari big business. But not all of them would be progressive. There are some sections which have direct links with big business or interests bound with feudal exploitation. Though these sections of the bourgeoisie of backward provinces show some dissatisfaction against the ruling bourgeoisie on the question of linguistic provinces, just as the big bourgeoisie shows some dissatisfaction against the imperialists on matters of industrialisation, etc., yet, whatever tactical use we might make of that dissatisfaction, they cannot be considered as even temporary allies in the democratic front. Only the rest of the sections of the bourgeoisie which stand up against the big bourgeoisie on the question of linguistic provinces, as on other issues, can be considered as an ally.

With regard to the role of the middle bourgeoisie we must be clear. In view of the extreme accentuation of the general crisis of capitalism and sharp polarisation of class forces, they have to be considered only as "fellow-travellers", "at one or another time", "during one or another

period", not as "reliable or stable members of anti-imperialist camp".

(iv) The development of the united front is a process of struggle for unity—beginning from a joint demonstration or action for the most easily understood demands of the different sections, to the highest form of struggle for land, peace, bread and independence on a more permanent basis. And the most effective way to build it is to build it from below.

But it does not preclude agreement at the top between leaders and individuals of different classes, organisations or parties. Such agreements often become essential to facilitate unity from below—provided a systematic exposure of the activities of the disruptive leaders is carried out and the influence of bourgeois nationalism fought in a determined manner.

### *The Second Essential of the Chinese Path*

The second essential point of the Chinese path is that the national-liberation struggle has to be waged by means of armed guerilla warfare in the countryside, the formation of liberation bases and liberation armies—culminating in the seizure of power all over the country. This armed struggle is closely linked up with and is inseparable from the peasants' agrarian revolution without which it would be impossible to organise armed struggle.

### *Feudal Relations Dominant—Agrarian Revolution the Axis*

In the rural areas of India feudal and semifeudal relations are still dominant. The imperialist rulers have deliberately kept this feudal and semifeudal agrarian framework so as to serve their robber economy. The denial of this landed the old polit bureau in left-sectarian analysis. However this should not blind us to the growth of considerable capitalist relations in the womb of feudalism in India. If we ignore this phenomenon there arises the danger of swinging to the other extreme from our previous

sectarian line leading to the failure in organising the agricultural labour or farm servants so as to boldly lead their wage struggles. Another factor to be noted in this connection is—the agricultural labourers of our colonial country are different from those in the advanced capitalist countries, because of their continued subjection to feudal and colonial exploitation, besides their wage-slavery.

This huge section of agricultural labour in our country—in reality a pauperised peasant—will act as the vanguard of the agrarian revolution and is a vital factor in the struggle for people's democratic revolution in the countryside.

Nevertheless feudal relations being dominant, the agrarian revolution is the axis of the Indian national-liberation movement and "land to the tiller" is the main slogan of urgently-needed agrarian reform as well as of unity in struggle of the broad masses of the peasantry.

### *Armed Struggle on the Agenda*

The Indian national-liberation struggle had assumed a wide sweep, reached a qualitatively new level and entered on a new and higher phase of its development after the second world war. It had struck terror into the hearts of both the Indian big bourgeoisie and imperialism, which resulted in their collaboration. The Indian big bourgeoisie betrayed the national-liberation struggle and completely and openly went over to the camp of imperialism, which culminated in the Mountbatten award. The collaborationist regime of the imperialist-feudal-landlord-big-bourgeoisie let loose fascist white terror and unleashed a civil war to stem the advancing tide of revolution and to wipe out the revolutionary mass movement altogether. The growing tide of the agrarian revolution and the civil war let loose by the Nehru-Patel government placed the question of armed resistance on the agenda.

We Indian communists failed to understand the significance of this development and to change the perspective and tactics of the growth of our national-liberation strug-

gle, learning from the glorious revolutionary experience of China and the other Southeast Asian countries, Vietnam, Malaya, Burma, marching along the path of China. We stuck dogmatically to the conception of political general strike and countrywide insurrection, under the cover of the seemingly revolutionary slogan of "We do not recognise anybody except Marx-Engels-Lenin-Stalin", and refused to learn from life experience of Telangana and the hill border regions of Mymensingh district.

This arises from a dogmatic and distorted conception of the hegemony of the proletariat in the struggle for national liberation—that the physical participation of the entire working class in action, i.e. political general strike and insurrection, is the exclusive method of establishing and exercising hegemony. The proletariat under the leadership of its vanguard detachment, the communist party, can establish its hegemony over the peasant masses, and head the national-liberation movement in presentday world conditions in colonies and semicolonies through armed guerilla resistance, by establishing liberated bases in rural areas, and forming the liberation army, combined with flexible tactics in cities, leading to the final liberation of the cities and capture of full power over the entire country.

This is the new experience which the world proletariat has acquired out of the Chinese revolution, which is a third world-significant event, after great October socialist revolution and the victory of the antifascist forces under the leadership of the USSR in the second world war.

We pursued adventurist tactics with above wrong perspective of the growth of our revolution, and brought the party and the mass movement to the verge of an abyss. The editorial of the organ of the Cominform bureau and the Peking conference called our attention to the rich experience of China and put before us the main task of leading the agrarian revolution and building up of a liberation army for the victory of the revolution.

There is a misconception in the minds of certain com-

rades as to the directive of the Cominform bureau of "the formation, when necessary internal conditions allow for it, of people's liberation armies" and armed struggle "becoming the main form of national-liberation movement, in *many* colonies and dependent countries".

Some of them seem to think that India is exempted from the Chinese path because it did not refer to *all* but only to "*many*" colonies and dependencies. This is now washed away by the subsequent editorial of the organ of the Cominform bureau of 19 May 1950, in which India is also put along with other countries where armed struggle is taking place and by the life experience in India too—of Telangana, Andhra, hill border regions of Mymensingh district.

Another section of the comrades, while accepting formally the Chinese path, argue as if the conditions are not ripe for carrying an armed guerilla resistance except in a very few areas and first preconditions have to be created slowly by winning of the majority of the people and building up people's unity through propaganda. Then one fine morning give a call for organising a liberation army and then proceed with armed struggle winning victory after victory to complete capture of power. This is nothing but underestimating the depth of discontent and disillusionment of the masses with the Congress raj, misunderstanding and misapplying Chinese experience, and refusing to see what life itself teaches here in our country.

These few years of Congress "ram rajya" have proved to the masses that it is the government of bloodsuckers and not of the people. All their old illusions that Congress would better their lot have been completely shattered. On the other hand, they are convinced by their life experience that their lot is getting worsened day by day. "Congress is worse than the Britishers" is the common word on everybody's lips. It is maintaining its existence mainly on its bayonet. The people want this satanic raj to go. Majority of them do not know how to end it. But any act of resistance to white terror of the Congress government and the bloodsuckers from any quarter brings forth automatic

sympathy from the broad masses of the people, even in the politically most backward parts of the country.

It is true that we have to contend against the leadership of the Socialist Party, lackeys of the Indian big bourgeoisie—who are spreading Gandhian ideology and putting forth the solution of the "ballot box" for the mitigation of the wretched conditions of the people. We have also to contend against the leadership of the left parties and groups, who are spreading legalistic and constitutionalist illusions to capitalise this discontent of the toiling masses. But what we have to realise is that we cannot counteract this bourgeois-reformist poison and legalist-constitutionalist illusion, spread by the socialist lackeys and left parties and groups through propaganda alone. We have to *combine judiciously* and carry on *simultaneously* propaganda, mass struggles, armed guerilla resistance and organisation of the party and mass organisations. To counterpose one against the other is to nullify all and the result is inactivity. The main precondition required, i.e. the mass desire that the ruling power should go and also the revolutionary position taken by a big section of the masses under the leadership of our party is already there. People are already on the move in their own way in certain areas, Telangana, Andhra, hill border regions of Mymensingh district; they have been carrying on guerilla warfare, which can rightly be described as the beginning of the Indian democratic revolution. Reports appear in the daily press of strikes, agrarian struggles, actions of militant resistance and tribal revolts. While reformism sabotaged the mass struggles outright, left-sectarianism refused to give tactics suited to the existing conditions and level of mass consciousness and thereby allowing the enemy to smash the mass struggles, with the same results. The objective conditions for starting guerilla resistance are there taking India as a whole, leaving aside some areas. The only thing required is for the party to utilise them. Our old yardstick of measuring the readiness of the masses for armed action by whether the

overwhelming majority of the masses themselves are coming physically into the streets and have accepted the party's full political programme or not, has to be discarded. The thing to be noted is that guerilla resistance can and has to be started against the fascist terror basing on the general support of the masses.

This does not mean that we launch armed struggle immediately wherever we are and whatever may be the conditions. The way of going forward successfully is, by the party boldly initiating mass struggles basing on the level of the consciousness of the masses in different localities, combined with armed guerilla resistance, so as to develop them quickly to a higher phase of land distribution and village people's committees (jama panchayats). It is only by this that the revolutionary movement can be defended and extended to wider and wider areas, ultimately embracing the whole country. It is only by adopting armed guerilla warfare that the party would be strengthened and extended. Thus a strong party heading the armed guerilla warfare will be able to unite the toiling masses and mobilise all the anti-imperialist classes, establish liberated bases and organise liberation armies in areas topographically and otherwise suited for them, leading to the final capture of power and complete liberation of the entire country.

This does not in the least mean that the central committee is minimising the role of the organisation and asking comrades everywhere in India to outright start resistance actions even without setting the house in order, reorganising the party machine smashed by left-sectarianism, educating and convincing the comrades on the new line and making minimum preliminary preparations. These minimum organisational steps have to be taken immediately by the party committees everywhere. We will not launch armed resistance actions on our own without fulfilling the abovementioned minimum immediate jobs. But we cannot sit quiet when either the enemy attacks us or the masses are on the move, under the plea of not having fulfilled the abovementioned minimum jobs. In that



case, we have to fulfil them while leading masses and carrying on resistance against the fascist attack of the enemy.

### *In Cities and Industrial Centres*

With this perspective of the Chinese path for people's democratic revolution in India, we have to use flexible tactics in the cities and industrial centres—illegal propaganda, various types of protest actions and demonstrations, strikes, armed actions, etc.—whichever form is best suited to the particular place and moment, in order to conserve and strengthen the revolutionary movement. We have to coordinate this movement in the cities and industrial centres with the armed guerilla struggle in the rural areas and conduct the general movement with a combined plan.

The Peking manifesto says: "Working men and women: in the cities, under the white terror, apply with good judgement and elasticity the tactics which can best ensure the defence of your interests. Active trade unionists, you must be present wherever the masses are, even in the trade unions, organisations and institutions led by the reactionaries. You must organise the day-to-day struggle of the masses for the defence of their interests, particularly to oppose slave labour and every kind of discrimination. In this way you should prepare and gather forces to organise, when a favourable opportunity arises, broad mass movements which will deliver decisive blows to the reactionary forces."

### *Fight for Peace*

The imperialist antidemocratic camp, led by US imperialists, caught in a crisis, is feverishly preparing for another war to gain world supremacy. But, without suppressing the national-liberation movement in the colonies, the imperialists cannot consider themselves fully prepared for unleashing an aggressive war against the camp of peace and democracy. The imperialist aggressors are in fact, al-

ready waging war against the colonial liberation movement on a vast territory extending from South Korea to Burma, Malaya, Vietnam and Indonesia.

For this offensive against the liberation struggles of the Southeast Asian colonies, the imperialists today seek to make India their main satellite base.

In these conditions, the struggle of the Indian people against their imperialist oppressors is a vital part of the common struggle of the working people throughout the world against the Anglo-American instigators of a new war, for peace and democracy. The success of the national-liberation struggle of India strengthens the world front of peace and this struggle will be her most effective contribution to the common struggle of the world peace camp.

Along with this struggle, the people of India have to play an increasingly wide and active part in the peace campaign led by the World Peace Congress by signature campaign for banning the atom bomb and by other actions and demonstrations. The game of the Anglo-American instigators of a new war and the subservient role of the Nehru government have to be exposed before the people. Thousands of peace committees have to be formed throughout the length and breadth of India, carrying on active agitation and campaign.

### *National Question*

On the question of nationalities, the polit bureau pursued since the second party congress a reactionary policy of subservience to big-bourgeois chauvinism by opposing all national movements, movements for linguistic-cultural provinces and dissolution of feudal states (as in Hyderabad) and by advocating in all cases (as in the case of Kashmir) joining the Indian Union by itself as the demand of the Communist Party. In countering the demand for autonomous linguistic provinces and dissolution of states (Hyderabad) it advanced the left-sectarian slogan of self-determination for toilers as against selfdetermination of

nations. In doing so the polit bureau revised and distorted the Lenin-Stalin principles on the question of selfdetermination of nations. Under the pretext of fighting the deviation towards the chauvinism of the bourgeoisie of the suppressed nationalities, the polit bureau strengthened the chauvinism of the ruling big bourgeoisie, the agent of Anglo-American imperialism.

On the national question the Communist Party stands and fights for equality of all nations and seminationalities growing as nations, equal development of their language, culture and economic life, selfdetermination of all nationalities and seminationalities to the point of secession, unity of all these nations into a voluntary union.

The demand for equality of all languages and the formation of autonomous linguistic provinces is a progressive, democratic, anti-imperialist demand. It is directed against princely autocracy and is an instrument for the dissolution of princely states. It is directed against the oppression and exploitation of the ruling big bourgeoisie. It is directed against partition, all forms of communal division and all forms of racial, communal and national discriminations. Above all, it is directed against foreign imperialist domination. The most important driving force of the various movements of the nationalities is the peasantry, fighting under the leadership of the working class.

The reactionary elements of various nationalities in India (princes, landlords and reactionary section of the bourgeoisie), are utilising the movements for autonomous linguistic provinces to serve their reactionary purposes. The task of the Communist Party is to seize the initiative and lead these movements as part of the general struggle for national independence and people's democracy, for the abolition of princedom and all survivals of feudalism, for abolition of landlordism and land to the tiller.

Thus the demands for Vishalaandhra, Samyukta Karnataka, Samyukta Maharashtra, United Kerala. United Bengal, autonomous regions for tribal and semitribal peoples, etc., are progressive democratic demands. These demands

can be achieved by overthrowing the rule of imperialism and its agents in the Indian Union and Pakistan, i.e. the big bourgeoisie and the feudal classes.

(3) Besides the above two documents, a resolution, on Mao, prepared by the polit bureau was discussed, amended and adopted. In that resolution, an apology has been tendered for the slanderous attack in the press on Mao, throwing to the winds all principles of fraternal relations with brother parties and their leaders; anti-Marxist criticism of Mao's formulations in his *New Democracy* made by the polit bureau in its documents has been sharply condemned and criticised; lessons for the Indian democratic revolution have been drawn from Mao's valuable writings and the rich experience of the Chinese revolution.

(4) The old polit bureau could not produce any collective selfcriticism of its own but each of its members submitted his own individual selfcritical report before the central committee. These reports came under sharp scrutiny and criticism from the members of the central committee. In the course of the discussions over the selfcritical reports of the members of the polit bureau, each of the members of the central committee made a short selfcritical review of his own role and activities mainly covering the period since the second party congress. The collective discussions over the selfcritical reports of the members of the polit bureau and the members of the central committee helped all to understand the role and failings of every member of the central committee—each accepting the collective criticism made in the central committee meeting.

(5) "A Short Report on the Left-Sectarianism in the Organisational Activities of the Polit Bureau, the Main Organisational Tasks before the Central Committee and Directives for the Proper Functioning of the Central Committee and the Polit Bureau in Future", submitted by the Andhra members of the central committee present at the

meeting, was also discussed, amended and adopted by the central committee.

(6) The central committee on the basis of the above report dissolved the polit bureau and removed Ranadive from the post of general secretaryship for the following crimes:

Ranadive has been the initiator, executor and dogged defender of the Trotsky-Tito type of left-sectarian political line. The polit bureau had fallen in line, conciliated and abetted him in carrying out his anti-Leninist, liquidationist line, which has resulted in the party and mass movement being brought to the point of total disruption. The manifestations of that line are:

(a) Repudiation of the Lenin-Stalin teachings on imperialism and colonial revolution which resulted in equating the present stage of Indian revolution to the socialist stage.

(b) Sabotage of the agrarian revolution and armed struggle and adventurist tactics in towns and villages which brought the mass movement to the verge of total disruption.

(c) Bringing in of the titolist organisational methods, which resulted in almost disrupting the party organisation, suppressing innerparty democracy and poisoning inner-party life.

(d) Anti-international attitude and violation of the very principles of fraternal relations with brother parties, which resulted in overt and covert slander of brother parties and their leaders, supreme complacency and lack of vigilance against spies, etc.

(e) Rejection of all creative Marxism under the slogan "we recognise nobody except Marx-Engels-Lenin-Stalin" and finally distortion of all Marxism-Leninism to suit its own left-sectarian adventurist purposes.

The polit bureau as a whole was responsible for all the crimes stated above. But this does not mean either that every member of the polit bureau was responsible for all the crimes stated above or that every member was responsible in the same degree, taking each crime singly. The

different members of the polit bureau were responsible for the above crimes in varying degrees, which will be given in a short report on the organisational activities of the polit bureau as adopted by the central committee.

Regarding suppression of documents, it was found that, with the purpose of keeping the party politically blind and trading on ignorance, Ranadive, with the help of Adhikari, was responsible for the suppression of international documents. Ranadive was further responsible for suppression of several important innerparty documents.

(7) At the second party congress, a central committee of 31 had been elected. Such a big central committee was elected because the congress failed to take note of the fascist terror and impending illegality facing the party. If the central committee was to really discharge its functions as the effective political leadership of the entire party and the revolutionary movement in India, it ought to have been a compact functioning body, instead of an unwieldy one. Subsequent experience demonstrated the inadvisability of such a big number for the central committee. On the basis of the political-organisational discussions and decisions, the central committee proceeded to reconstitute itself as a compact functioning body. In the extremely illegal circumstances prevailing at present the central committee could not venture to think of a party congress and decided to proceed on the basis of the other alternative provided in the party constitution. i.e. reconstituting the central committee and convening the plenum (article X, sections 1 and 4 of the constitution taken together). Out of the central committee of 31, one comrade has died, six were in jail, two had been removed from the central committee and one had to be excluded from the central committee and kept under observation and enquiry because of serious charges of anti-party activity pending against him. All except two of the remaining members of the central committee had met and taken the decision of reconstituting itself and fixed the number at eleven, till the plenum is convened to discuss

everything and finally decide the issue. In the opinion of the old central committee, the principles which, as far as possible, had to be kept in view in selecting personnel of a new central committee were as follows:

(a) Unreservedly accept the new line of the party.

(b) Political and organisational capacities to get things done. In critical situation no vacillations either opportunistic or political, but stand like a rock amidst storm. (The political-organisational capacities of individual have to be judged in relation to his past activities).

(c) Even if on his own he is not able to give correct solutions to major problems, at least he must have the ear to learn from the party ranks and pose organisational, political and mass problems before the central committee and enrich the central committee with experience.

(d) The central committee members who had been the propounders and fanatical executors of this sectarian line and adopted trotskyite-titoist methods of organisation, who have refused even to think about their sectarian line even after the editorial of the information bureau organ appeared, and who after months of discussion of the new line refused to orientate in spite of the sharp criticism of the ranks, must as far as possible not be entrusted with heavy responsibility of the central committee and polit bureau membership until they prove in practice that they are once again fit for being entrusted with such responsibility.

The election of the new central committee took place based on the selfcriticism of the members of the polit-bureau and the central committee.\*

Though the number of members of the reconstituted central committee was fixed at 11 as a provisional arrangement till the plenum is convened, only nine could be

\* The reconstituted central committee consisted of the following nine members of whom the first three were members of the polit bureau: (1) C. Rajeswara Rao (general secretary), (2) M. Basava-punniah, (3) Biresh Misra, (4) P. Sundarayya, (5) D. Venkateswara Rao, (6) Somnath Lahiri, (7) Moni Singh, (8) E. M. S. Namboodiri-pad, (9) S. V. Parulekar.

chosen for the present from among those members of the old central committee who are outside jail and from other comrades in provinces known to the central committee. On the basis of the guiding principles stated above, it was decided to fill up the rest of the two places by the new central committee from among the comrades in the provinces and the members of the old central committee not elected to the new central committee, in course of time, on the basis of further discussions and practical work.

Among the nine elected for the new central committee, four members of the central committee are taken from Andhra in which the member of the polit bureau from Andhra is included; one member of the old polit bureau from Bengal who had not been an active participant in the old polit bureau's functioning and had little to do with its turkish-titoite methods of organisation; a member of the provincial committee from Bengal who had been the leader of the armed struggle in Mymensingh; one of the members of the central committee from Kerala; the member of the central committee from Assam who, though he surrendered to the polit bureau when badgered, had taken to organising armed guerilla struggle on the basis of his experience; a member of the central committee from Maharashtra who had initiated the agrarian struggle in Ahmednagar, and has wide experience of trade-union and peasant movement. This is by no means an ideal central committee, but a central committee best under the circumstances. If we approach the problem from ideal standards, we cannot have a central committee at all. This does not mean that there are no comrades in the provinces other than the Mymensingh district comrade fit for the central committee, but the old central committee could not estimate the cadre in the provinces immediately. That is why only nine could be elected in spite of the fixing of the number at eleven. Comrades have to understand that these decisions of the old central committee are of a provisional nature till the meeting of the plenum which is the final authority, intended to unify and rebuild the party and to



rehabilitate the mass movement and put it on the rails of armed struggle.

(8) The central committee decided to release the following documents adopted by it to the ranks for discussion and also decided to start a forum for facilitating the innerparty discussion:

(a) Critique on the three polit bureau documents, i.e. "People's Democracy", "Agrarian Question" and "Tactical Line".

(b) Political Resolution.

(c) Resolution on Mao.

(d) Organisational report on the left-sectarian activities of the polit bureau.

It also decided to hold a plenum of the new central committee including the representatives of the provincial committees in about six months' time to finalise the drafts and take final organisational decisions about central committee and provincial committees, etc.

Meanwhile the party units have to carry on the day-to-day activity of the party on the basis of the political line given in the drafts for discussion and lead the mass revolutionary movement.

(9) The central committee decided to refer to an inquiry commission the cases of two of its members who had been removed from it by the old polit bureau and the case of a member of the old polit bureau who was reported to have been in contact with party renegades.

(10) The central committee decided to reestablish close fraternal relations with brother parties; to invite the criticism of the Cominform bureau on its political and organisational decisions, and to get the opinion of other parties—specially that of the CPSU(B) and Chinese Communist Party.

#### DECISIONS OF THE NEW CENTRAL COMMITTEE

The new central committee has met and taken the following important decisions besides certain others:

(1) It elected a general secretary (member in the old

polit bureau from Andhra) and a polit bureau of three, including the general secretary. The other two members of the polit bureau are one from among the members of the central committee from Andhra and the member of the central committee from Assam. The new central committee has no alternative except to elect a polit bureau of three, because a polit bureau of more than three is out of question in central committee of nine.

(2) The new central committee set itself the task of cleaning the organisational mess created by the left-sectarian line and titoite methods of the old polit bureau. It took important decisions regarding the reorganisation of the provincial committees of Bengal, Bihar, Tamilnadu, Kerala, Assam and Maharashtra and Bombay.

It also asked the provincial committees to review such of the cases of disciplinary actions taken against committees and individuals in the last two years, as need to be reconsidered, and take suitable measures in the light of the new political line.

The central committee withdraws the documents of the old polit bureau—"People's Democracy", "Agrarian Question", "Tactical Line"—for the present. Other documents of the old polit bureau will also be reviewed and necessary action taken later. But it asks the comrades not to take any document or circular of the old polit bureau or fractions of mass fronts as authoritative any longer.

(3) As the new central committee had not had sufficient time to finalise the following documents, it decided that the polit bureau should finalise them and circulate them to the ranks for discussion.

The documents are:

- (a) Tactics and tasks on the workingclass front.
- (b) Tactics and tasks inside jails.
- (c) Tactics and tasks on the student front.
- (d) Tactics and tasks on the agrarian front (to be prepared). Meanwhile the Andhra documents on the subject are to be circulated and comrades helped with the experience of Telangana and Andhra movements.

(e) A draft on women's front.

(4) The new central committee decided to circulate the minutes of the meeting of the old central committee and the selfcritical reports of the members of the old polit bureau to the provincial committees in order to give them a better understanding of the decisions of the old and new central committees though it is not the normal practice to circulate the minutes of the central committee to lower units. The provincial committees can utilise this material, along with the documents issued on the new political line, for giving the lower party committees and ranks better conviction about the political and organisational decisions of the old and new central committees. The new central committee hopes this will help the political and organisational unification of the party in this critical situation.

(5) As enjoined by the old central committee, the new central committee appointed a commission to enquire into the lack of vigilance against Titoite spies, on the part of the central organisations of the party.

### *Guarantees for the Correct Political Line*

The tradition of our party, specially since the "people's war" period, has been to swing like a pendulum from one extreme to the other. We need not go into the distant past to prove this. Suffice it to illustrate from the people's war period. For full six months after the dastardly attack by Hitler on the Soviet Union, our party went along the bourgeois-nationalist path characterising it as an imperialist war. Then we woke up and suddenly swung to the other extreme of the theory of "automatic liberation", of an anti-Japanese front from workers to zamindars and religious preachers, and no-strike, no-struggle tactics in the name of "production". We continued this reformist policy and practice with some changes, i.e. we formally discarded the slogan of 'automatic liberation' but in practice followed the same line by trailing behind the big bourgeoisie and Congress leadership for more than two years after the war. Then we woke up suddenly like Rip Van Winkle at

the end of 1947 to jump into left-sectarianism which has brought the party and the mass movement to the present plight of total disruption.

It is not necessary to write in detail how during the long period of 1942 to 1948 every time the central committee met, it used to come out with a resolution beating its breast and saying: "We have underestimated this point", "overestimated that point", but this time "We have correctly estimated all points" and come to a "correct conclusion"—only to repeat the same sorrowful tale once again!

Comrades! In this background of our party history, you are perfectly justified in feeling sceptical this time also and asking. "What is the guarantee that this time the central committee has chalked out a correct path?" It is the duty of the central committee to give you a convincing answer.

There exist three guarantees now which did not exist so strongly before:

(1) The direct political guidance of the Cominform bureau and political assistance of the brother parties, i.e. CPSU(B), Communist Party of China, etc. Our political decisions are based on the editorial of the organ of the Cominform bureau, Peking manifesto, documents of the comrades of the CPSU(B) and documents of Mao Tse-tung and the Chinese Communist Party which have rendered not only general political guidance, but also guidance on certain vital details.

We can assure you that we will make the most earnest efforts to seek and obtain regular criticism from the Cominform bureau.

(2) Our decisions are not only based upon the valuable theoretical and political material stated above, but also on the rich practical experience of Telangana, Andhra; the hill border regions of Mymensingh, etc. besides the costly lessons we have learnt from our right and left deviations.

(3) Never in the history of our party, either in the period of reformism or the period of sectarianism, inner-party democracy was properly established, on the contrary it was either crippled or destroyed completely.

Never in the history of the party, the ranks and lower committees were associated with the shaping of the party policy, i.e. strategy and tactics. A mechanical division—like that in bourgeois and petty-bourgeois parties—of political and practical functions of the party was made. The right of chalking out political line and taking important political decisions was arrogated to the central committee (which reduced itself to the polit bureau in the days of illegality) and practical work left to the "dumb ranks" of the party. Unity of theory and practice is one of the cardinal principles of Marxism. No mechanical separation of political and practical functions is permissible inside a communist party. Every party committee and every cell has to be a political and practical leader within the limits of their respective areas. Every party member has to participate constantly in innerparty life and contribute his or her share in shaping the party policy and tactics and arriving at important decisions. This is the surest guarantee against either the party going wrong or the party leadership running amuck as in the recent past.

The old and new central committee decided to forge this guarantee by firmly establishing innerparty democracy, based on the fundamental organisational principles of democratic centralism. In pursuance of that aim, we have to immediately associate the ranks in hammering out the new line in all details, through organising widest possible innerparty discussions on the basis of international documents and documents of the old and new central committees and finalise the new line at the plenum.

Hence, comrades, you can march forward with confidence and extricate the party and the mass movement out of this dangerous situation, keeping the abovestated guarantees in mind.

#### PRESENT CRITICAL SITUATION & THE MAIN TASK BEFORE THE PARTY

"We have to remember that the enemies of the party won't sit quiet until we find methods of correcting the

past mistakes and evolve a new line. They are already on the move with a view to deliver smashing blows while the party is in political confusion and they want to wipe it out before it can hammer out a new line and reorientate itself on that basis. The imperialists and their agents, the Indian big business, unleashed a new wave of fascist terror unknown in the history of our country, not only against Telangana and Andhra districts of the Madras province, but on all our strongholds throughout the country, such as Kerala, Tamilnadu, eastern United Provinces, parts of Bihar, Bengal, Assam, Manipur, etc. The white terror and civil war let loose in Telangana and Madras province is no ordinary thing—shooting at sight of our party members and sympathisers, inhuman torture in specially built torture chambers, shooting down comrades by bringing them out of subjails, etc. Their plan is to wipe out our strongholds before the situation goes out of their control. The Congress government is making serious efforts under the guidance of the Anglo-American imperialists to square up its quarrels with the reactionary puppet government of Pakistan, not only to stem the tide of the revolution in the Indian subcontinent but also to help the imperialists to drown the revolutionary national-liberation movements in the countries of Southeast Asia. Another concrete purpose of these attempts at rapprochement is to sandwich the resistance areas like the hill border regions of Mymensingh district, Manipur, Tippera and others on the borders of India and Pakistan.

"The leadership of the Socialist Party of India, the lackeys of big business, have let loose a barrage of lies and slander against the party. They are not only trying hard to isolate us from other progressive left groups, but also appealing to the Congress government to realise that this policy of armed struggle in the rural side is more dangerous than the previous adventurist tactics of our party, and to suppress us all the more vigorously and help them in their nefarious game.

"The renegades thrown out of the party are making

every effort under the leadership of Joshi to disrupt the party and are waiting for a chance to split the party.

"In such a serious situation, the party cannot sit only discussing the new line. It has to carry on a twofold task simultaneously if it is at all serious about the guidance given in the editorial of the information bureau organ and the Peking manifesto.

"Firstly, to clean all the sectarian and reformist rubbish and hammer out a new clearcut strategy and tactics.

"Secondly, to proceed steadily to put the party on the rails of armed struggle in the countryside and rebuild the movement in the cities and workingclass centres on the basis of our new line and tactics.

"To lose sight of either of the above and to forget that both are to be *simultaneously fulfilled* leads finally to liquidation of the party and the revolutionary movement altogether" ("Short Report on the Organisational Activity of the Polit Bureau" submitted by Andhra members of the central committee).

To fulfil the above twofold tasks under conditions of such a critical situation, what is needed today is the maintenance of iron discipline inside the party—discipline based on the Lenin-Stalin principle of full innerparty democracy combined with strict centralisation. The central committee is glad to note the struggle that the comrades have already begun for the reassertion of innerparty democracy and congratulates the comrades on their invaluable contribution towards evolving the correct party line in the recent period. But the central committee, at the same time, cannot but feel concerned at certain harmful tendencies that are raising their head here and there. At places the slogan has been raised for reorganisation of leading party committees from below and so-called 'action committees' are sought to be formed which means reducing the party to splinter groups. These slogans do not at all help the party to break the stalemate but will lead the party towards utter disruption, and help the disruptors to undermine its unity. Such slogans strike at the very root of democratic

centralisation—the struggle for which has begun today in the entire party. While pointing out this dangerous disruptive trend inside the party—a trend born however out of just indignation against the longstanding bureaucratism of the leadership—the central committee has full confidence in the party ranks that they will not allow the undermining of the discipline and unity of the party built through the toil and struggle of the past 20 years.

### *Our Strength and Opportunities*

Comrades! We need not despair. It is true that the party and the mass movement have suffered great loss and they have been brought to the point of total disruption, and that they have to be rebuilt on entirely new foundations. It is also true that the enemies of the party are laying plans to wipe them out completely. But there is yet time and material to rebuild the party and the mass movement, if we make an objective estimate of the opportunities and dangers facing the party and if we make a move quickly without wasting any more time and put our shoulders to the wheel as one man.

Comrades! Do not see only our weaknesses but see our strength also, see not only the dangers but also see the opportunities offered by the national and international conditions.

(1) In spite of innumerable obstacles, both internal and external, the glorious Telangana armed struggle—the beginning of the people's democratic revolution in India—has not only survived but extended to new areas inside the state and outside to Andhra districts of Madras province. Now armed struggle is being carried on in an area of 40,000 square miles with a population of 120 lakh (total area of Andhradesa is 120 thousand square miles and population 3 crore) situated in the heart of Andhradesa.

Armed warfare is being carried on in the hill border regions of Mymensingh district in an area of 1000 square miles with a population of about one lakh.

In some other areas of Assam, Tippera, eastern United



Provinces, Ahmednagar district of Maharashtra, people are taking to arms to resist Congress fascist terror.

Reports appear in the daily newspapers of local strikes, spontaneous actions of resistance against Congress terror regime, even from the most backward corners of our country. The militant mood and actions of the tribal people everywhere have to be specially noted in this connection. All these point to the red dawn that is appearing on the horizon and show us the path to march forward.

(2) The Congress government is thoroughly exposed before the entire people as the tool of the bloodsuckers, before its own following. They want this fascist raj to end, though they still suffer from legalistic and constitutionalist illusions and have not yet come to the path of armed struggle. It is merely a matter of time before they take to the path of armed struggle, if there is any force capable of boldly leading them. In spite of all our mistakes, our party stands out before the general mass of the people as the fearless and uncompromising champion of the cause of the toiling masses. It enjoys wide influence and prestige among them.

(3) The ruling class is in crisis, utter confusion and panic. All the signs of crisis inside the ruling class in India are clearly visible now. Tata-Birla conflict, conflict over monopolising air services, resignation of Tata's man Matthai and Birla's people filling up the central cabinet; Dalmia's falling away from the ruling clique of the Congress, his open charges in the press against the two big men of the Congress, Patel and Nehru; Congress going to pieces, open splits in every province, starting of new parties—UP rebel Congress legislators starting a new party, People's Congress, Sachar's group going out of the Congress in Punjab, Prakasham's affair in Andhra province, etc. all these are a few examples of the intensity of crisis and conflicts among the ruling class. This shows that the situation is ripe for the smashing of the ruling class by armed action of the peoples and for people taking their destiny into their hands.

(4) The radicalisation of the ranks of the left parties and the masses behind them is a very significant factor to be noted. In spite of the efforts of their leaders to keep them within the four corners of the ballot-box and so-called peaceful methods, they are taking to the path of militant struggles. The conference of the Workers' and Peasants' Party of Maharashtra which has considerable influence among the peasantry recently passed a resolution accepting the teachings of Marx-Engels-Lenin-Stalin as its guide and the lead of the editorial of the organ of the Cominform bureau. The United Socialist Organisation passed a resolution condemning the rôle of the Congress government acting as the tool of the Anglo-American warmongers.

Above all dissatisfaction is growing daily in the ranks of the Socialist Party against the pro-big-business and anti-people policies and practice of its leadership. The recent report of a split in the Bombay branch of the party over the question of militant forms of struggle is an instance to the point.

The urge for trade-union unity in the ranks of the different trade-union centres, the growing united opposition of the ranks to the black labour bills and the progress of the struggle for trade-union unity have shown you how great the opportunities are.

All the above examples are the first signs of the radicalisation of the ranks and masses of the left parties.

(5) The international situation is much more favourable for the revolutionary forces in India than ever before. The strength of the people's forces has grown immensely and the balance has further shifted in favour of the world democratic socialist camp, because of the world historic victory of the Chinese revolution against the combined forces of American imperialists and Kuomintang reactionaries, the tremendous growth of the peace movement all over the world, specially in Europe, against the Anglo-American warmongers, the victorious advance of the armed liberation struggles of Asian countries—Vietnam, Philippines, South Korea, Malaya, Burma, Indonesia,

etc., and above all the mighty growth in the strength of the Soviet Union—the imperialists are shaking in their shoes, seeing the writing on the wall. Now the world people's forces are in a position to give moral and material aid to the forces of the Indian people in their struggle for national liberation. In this connection we have to recollect the worldwide agitation carried on against the cruel death sentences on the Telangana heroes, which has at least made the Nehru government retrace its steps though temporarily.

Comrades! Such is our strength and such are the immensely favourable opportunities before us. The future of our party is in our hands. Let us act with confidence in the cause with coolness of judgement, with courage and steadfastness, keeping in mind our strength and opportunities. Let us put our collective and individual effort to fulfil the immediate tasks facing us all.

The central committee appeals to you to:

(1) Contribute your best in hammering out the new strategy and tactics.

(2) Fight left and right disruption and rebuild the party firmly on the basis of democratic centralisation; keep vigilance against spies and agent-provocateurs.

(3) Rebuild the mass movement in the town and countryside and put the movement in the agrarian areas on the rails of armed struggle.

(4) Develop the peace campaign as a part of the struggle for national liberation.

(5) Fraternise with the ranks of the left parties, mass organisations, groups and individuals to organise joint actions, and build the democratic front.

(6) Deepen your knowledge of Marxism-Leninism and learn to apply it to your daily problems.

**VICTORY WILL BE OURS!**

## **IV**

### **Report on Left-Sectarianism in the Organisational Activities of the Polit-Bureau and the Main Organisational Tasks before the CC and Directives for the Proper Functioning of the CC and PB in Future**

Left-sectarianism has got its organisational methods which are in contradiction with the principles of organisational methods and style of work of the communist parties as laid down in the "Thesis on Organisation and Structure of the Communist Parties", adopted at the third congress of the Communist International in 1921, together with the "Statutes of the Communist International". These antiparty organisational methods of left-sectarianism together with its politics, especially as pursued by the PB, have worked havoc with the party and mass organisations during the last two years since the second party congress and have disrupted them and brought them to the point of liquidation. No PC—except the Andhra PC—has been sending organisational reports since the last two years as to the state of party and mass organisations, number of party members, their political level, the functions of cells and party committees, fractions etc. In fact neither the PB nor the PCs have made any serious efforts in this direction. In these circumstances it is not possible to place before

Submitted by the three Andhra CCMs before the CC and amended and accepted in the CC meeting in May-June 1950 and published in July 1950.

you a comprehensive and detailed report of the damage caused by left-sectarianism to the organisation of the party and the present state of the party organisation. This will be possible only after the different provincial committees have prepared all-sided and detailed organisational reports, which have to be done later. Hence this document confines itself to the functioning of PB and CC, the PB's left-sectarian methods of organisation and style of work, the harm caused due to these to the party, directives for the proper functioning of the CC and PB, and their reconstitution on the basis of the principles of the party organisation as laid down by the abovementioned thesis of the Communist International and in the light of the revolutionary tasks facing the party at present.

*Democratic Centralism—the Main  
Organisational Principle of the Party*

"The organic unity in the communist party organisation must be attained through democratic centralisation" says the CI. All the other organisational principles of the party and the style of work emerge from the abovementioned main organisational principle of democratic centralisation. Hence it is necessary to quote in full from the thesis and the statutes of the Communist International regarding the question:

"Democratic centralisation in the communist party organisation must be real synthesis, a fusion of centralism and proletarian democracy. This fusion can be achieved only on the basis of constant common activity, constant common struggle of the entire party organisation. Centralisation in the communist party organisation does not mean formal and mechanical centralisation but a centralisation of communist activities, that is to say the formation of a strong leadership, ready for war and at the same time capable of adaptability. A formal or mechanical centralisation is the centralisation of the 'power' in the hands of an industrial bureaucracy, dominating over

the rest of the membership or over the masses of the revolutionary proletariat standing outside the organisation. Only the enemies of the communists can assert that the communist party conducting the proletarian mass struggle and centralising the communist leadership is trying to rule over the revolutionary proletariat. Such an assertion is a lie. Neither is any rivalry for power nor any contest for supremacy within the party at all compatible with the fundamental principles of democratic centralism adopted by the Communist International.

"In the organisation of the old, nonrevolutionary labour movement, there has developed an all-pervading dualism of the same nature as that of the bourgeois state, namely, the dualism between the bureaucracy and the 'people'. Under this baneful influence of bourgeois environment there has developed a separation of functions, a substitution of barren, formal democracy for the living association of common endeavour and the splitting up of the organisation into active functionaries and passive masses. Even the revolutionary labour movement inevitably inherits this tendency to dualism and formalism to a certain extent from the bourgeois environment.

"The communist party must fundamentally overcome these contrasts by systematic and persevering political and organising work and by constant improvement and revision.

"In transforming a socialist mass party into a communist party, the party must not confine itself to merely concentrating the authority in the hands of its central leadership while leaving the old order unchanged. Centralisation should not merely exist on paper, but be actually carried out, and this is possible of achievement only when the members at large will feel this authority as a fundamentally efficient instrument in their common activity and struggle. Otherwise it will appear to the masses as a bureaucracy within the party and therefore likely to stimulate opposition to all centralisation, to all leadership, to

all stringent discipline. Anarchism is the opposite pole of bureaucracy.

"Merely formal democracy in the organisation cannot remove either bureaucratic or anarchical tendencies, which have found fertile soil on the basis of just that democracy. Therefore the centralisation of the organisation, i.e. the aim to create a strong leadership, cannot be successful if its achievement is sought on the basis of formal democracy. The necessary preliminary conditions are the development and maintenance of living associations and mutual relations within the party between the directing organs and members, as well as between the party and the masses of the proletariat outside the party" (*Principles of Party Organisation*).

Further,

"The Communist International and its sections are built up on the basis of democratic centralism, the fundamental principles of which are: (a) election of all the leading committees of the party, subordinate and superior (by general meetings of the party members, conferences, congresses and international congresses); (b) periodical reports by leading party committees to their constituents; (c) decisions of superior party committees to be obligatory for subordinate committees, strict party discipline and prompt execution of the decisions of the Communist International, of leading committees and of the leading party centres.

"Policy questions may be discussed by the members of the party and by party organisations until such time as a decision is taken upon them by the competent party committee. After a decision has been taken by the congress of the Communist International, by the congress of the respective sections, or by leading committees of the Comintern, and of its various sections, these decisions must be unreservedly carried out even if a section of the party membership or of the local party organisations are in disagreement with it.

"In cases where a party exists illegally, the superior

party committees may appoint the subordinate committees and coopt members on their own committees, subject to subsequent endorsement by the competent superior party committees."

No further comments are necessary. The question is dealt with clearly and sharply in the above extracts themselves.

*State of the Party Organisation before  
the Second Party Congress*

Right-reformism had been the dominant deviation inside the party for a pretty long time, till the second party congress. It liquidated in practice the conception of the hegemony of the proletariat in the democratic revolution, though it had been chanting this like a 'mantram', the real meaning of which was masked. It made the party trail behind the Congress bourgeoisie before the people's war period, and both the Congress and League leadership since the people's war period till the second party congress, i.e. 1943 to 1947 end. Much worse, it had made the party trail behind the British imperialist enslavers during the people's war period, under the plea of "saving the Soviet Union", the fatherland of the world proletariat from nazi attack and "not disrupting the world antifascist front" with the slogans of 'no strike', 'no struggle' etc. This antiproletarian outlook expressed itself in the practical activity of the party in the form of not basing on the basic revolutionary classes—proletariat and town poor in the towns, agricultural labour and toiling peasants in the villages; but to base on the vacillating and exploiting classes of the democratic front—petty bourgeoisie in towns, middle and rich peasants in the villages. During the people's war period we even trailed behind reactionaries and enemies of the democratic revolution like landlords, liberal toadies of imperialism etc. This resulted in trailing behind revolutionary mass upsurge, refusal to organise the struggles of the masses, refusal to lead them on militant lines when



those struggles were launched, heading them hesitatingly but sabotaging at the first opportunity. In the people's war period strikes and other mass struggles were altogether banned under the plea of "not hampering production and playing into the hands of the fifth column" and that it might run away with the masses. In essence this outlook is one of class collaboration and humanitarian approach to the masses.

Right-reformism has its organisational methods consistent with politics. It had smuggled many organisational methods and much style of work of the social-democratic parties and liberal-bourgeois parties gradually and stealthily inside the party. It had departed to the right too far from the principle of democratic centralisation.

(1) The liberal-bourgeois organisational principle of federalism and formal democracy had penetrated into the party indirectly. Party committees were to be elected not on the basis of democratic centralisation, but on the basis of representation to groups, regions and other considerations. Hence the liberal-bourgeois practice of 'balance of power' and opportunist compromises between groups and individuals had also permeated inside the party.

The enforcement of the revolutionary iron discipline became impossible and "substitution of barren, formal democracy for the living association of common endeavour and the splitting up of the organisation into active functionaries and passive masses (i.e. party members—CC)" had come in its place.

(2) A mechanical and un-Marxist division was made between political and practical leadership of the party. The CC was declared political leader while the other committees and cells practical leader, which in practice meant the other party committees and cells have to follow blindly the political lead given by the CC and must not discharge their function of actively participating in the inner-party life for the shaping of the party line and tactics.

A systematic ideological and political emasculation of

the party was resorted to; reading of classics was discouraged under the plea of "abstract Marxism"; conducting of party schools had become a rare thing; even in the schools that were conducted, no theoretical education was given, only party policy and the 'tips' for carrying that policy were given.

(3) Bureaucracy from above and formal democracy and indiscipline from below had become a common thing inside the party. Each unit demands formal democracy from the higher unit, while itself practising bureaucracy on the unit below.

An extract from the document of the Andhra PC called "Organisational Review" prepared soon after the congress gives a clear picture of the point under consideration.

"The party leadership and party members have not been maintaining a living association with the masses, paying heed to their opinions and learning from them. Therefore decisions from above were being forced upon party members and the masses. The decisions of uniting with zamindars in order to grow more food, giving up strikes for increasing production, one-fourth sharecropping agreement, supporting the demand of separate electorates of the scheduled castes federation, reducing our paper to two pages, banning editorials being written—these and other decisions were since 1943 forced by the central committee upon the party and the masses. The provincial committee, while sending its disagreements with these decisions of the central committee, acted like a post office and imposed these decisions on the lower committees. Relating to this there were also other decisions which the PC forced upon the lower committees. In the same way, district and taluq committees forced the party decisions upon party members and the masses. Bureaucracy in the party developed in this form to be the main danger...

"As a result of party going along the wrong path and passing contradictory resolutions during the last six years, the confidence in party policy and party leadership has

become shattered. When the new CC resolution came out it became common for party members to ask: "What guarantee is there that this will not be changed either." Due to party leadership having forced resolutions and decisions upon them in the past, and as a reaction to bureaucracy, indiscipline (anarchism) has grown inside the party. Today this has spread like a disease to the whole of the party. It has become a habit with party members to gossip outside their units about party affairs. It is also happening that they carry out only those party decisions which they like and keep quiet about the others, or even when they know that they are going against party discipline they show scorn and look for excuses to justify themselves afterwards."

(4) Cells were dissolved and general-body meetings substituted in their places; the qualifications for the party membership lowered; fractions in mass organisations dissolved; education and promotion of comrades coming from the toiling classes—especially from working class, agricultural labour and poor peasantry—to leading positions was completely neglected. Hence utter reformists from upper classes—especially petty bourgeoisie—filled the party committees and many who never liquidated their upperclass antiproletarian habits wormed their way into leading positions.

(5) Because of the abovementioned state of affairs the bourgeois habits, morals, propaganda methods, financial methods, style of work, have all come to stay inside the party.

Because of the long period of reformist politics and practising of bourgeois organisational methods and style of work, the party had already become debilitated and devitalised by the time of the second party congress. The state of the organisation was suited for reformist, peaceful and open legal methods of functioning and not for illegal methods of functioning and the discharging of the revolutionary tasks posed by the second party congress. Right-

reformism had completely eaten away the very vitals of the party and left the party in a moth-eaten and truncated condition.

### *Left Sectarianism Liquidates the Party*

While keeping similar situation in view which our party faced at the time of the second party congress, the Communist International gave a warning to the communist parties that "in transforming a socialist mass party into a communist party the party must not confine itself to merely concentrating authority while leaving the old order unchanged", that the centralisation "is possible of achievement only when the members at large feel this authority as a fundamentally efficient instrument in their common activity and struggle. Otherwise it will appear as bureaucracy and struggle..."

In this same connection the Communist International gave a special warning to the leadership of the communist parties thus:

"This fundamental organisational task imposes upon the leading party organs the obligation of constantly directing and exercising a systematic influence over the party work. This requires a manifold exertion on the part of those comrades who are active in the leadership of their organisations of the party. Those in charge of communist activity must not only see to it that comrades—men and women—should be engaged in party work in general, they must help and direct such work systematically and with practical knowledge of the business, with a precise orientation in regard to special conditions. They must also endeavour to find out any mistake committed in their own activities on the basis of experience, constantly improving the methods of work and not forgetting for a moment the object of the struggle" (*Principles of Party Organisation*).

What did the new leadership, the PB (CC never met at all) elected at the second congress, do during these two years? Did it follow the directives given in the thesis of

the Communist International? No. Not a jot. It had gone exactly the opposite way to the abovementioned directives. It tried bureaucratically to carry centralisation only in name and "to merely concentrating the authority in the hands of its central leadership while leaving the old order unchanged". It refused to "help and direct such work (practical activity of the ranks and lower committees—cc) systematically and with practical knowledge of the business, with a precise orientation in regard to special conditions," and "to endeavour to find out any mistake committed in their activities (i.e. leadership's—cc)..."

On the other hand it refused to make any selfcriticism and dubbed everybody who dared to raise any doubt as cowards, betrayers, saboteurs, etc. and brought ruin on the party. It completely lost the confidence of the ranks and lower committees, betrayed the trust reposed on it at the time of the second party congress.

Left-sectarian deviation was rampant in the majority of the present PBMs by the time of second congress itself. The PB perfected itself in that direction since then. While right-reformism in the name of not disrupting the democratic front liquidated the conception of the hegemony of the proletariat, trailed behind the bourgeoisie and sabotaged mass struggles; left-sectarianism under the plea of upholding the conception of the hegemony of the proletariat isolated the proletariat from its allies in the democratic revolution and sabotaged and disrupted the mass struggles from the opposite end. While right-reformism sabotaged the revolutionary democratic movement by trailing behind the bourgeoisie, left-sectarianism disrupted it by running too far ahead of the movement by its adventurist calls and actions.

In the history of the Communist Party of India, left-sectarianism practised its own organisational methods in consonance with its adventurist and dogmatist politics, though some of them might be similar to those of right-reformism. Both right-reformism and left-sectarianism are bourgeois trends—in the final analysis—reflections inside

the party of the social environment outside. While right-reformism followed the organisational methods of a liberal-bourgeois party, i.e., of allowance for factional groups and the top leadership in power manoeuvres to keep its hold over the party machine through maintaining balance of power between different groups and practising formal democracy, left-sectarianism followed the bourgeois authoritarian methods, i.e. suppression of the opposition groups inside the party through terror though the principle of balance of power is utilised as an auxiliary to it and replacement of formal democracy through the 'iron discipline' of the automatons. These are the methods similar to those used by the fascist Tito clique inside the Yugoslav CP which were described by the communique of the information bureau thus:

"This type of organisation of the Yugoslav Communist Party cannot be described as anything but a sectarian-bureaucratic organisation. It leads to the liquidation of the party as an active, selfacting organism, it cultivates military methods of leadership in the party similar to the methods advocated in his day by Trotsky.

"It is completely intolerable state of affairs when the most elementary rights of members in the Yugoslav Communist Party are suppressed, when the slightest criticism of incorrect measures in the party is brutally repressed.

"The information bureau regards as disgraceful such actions as the expulsion from the party and the arrest of the central committee members, Comrades Djuiovic and Hebrang because they dared to criticise the anti-Soviet attitude of the leaders of the Yugoslav Communist Party, and called for friendship between Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union.

"The information bureau considers that such a disgraceful, purely Turkish, terrorist regime cannot be tolerated in the communist party. The interests of the very existence and development of the Yugoslav Communist Party demand that an end be put to this regime."

Left-sectarianism has not yet reached the climax as it

not be functioned. The PB of 9 also could not discharge its functions giving daily and regular guidance to the lower units. The same problem faced the PCs and in some provinces DCs and TCs also. With this white terror and illegality forced upon the party immediately after the party congress, the entire responsibility for reorganising the party so that it can discharge its revolutionary tasks under these illegal conditions, had fallen on to the shoulders of the PB.

As soon as illegality was forced upon the party, the PB ought to have met the CC and made it reconstitute itself into a smaller functioning CC suited to the conditions of illegality. As a matter of fact the party constitution adopted at the second party congress provides for such a contingency, though it had not been drafted keeping in view the conditions of extreme illegality.

The PB had practically done nothing in this matter but only allowed matters to drift. Not only at the time of the party congress but even after the congress the PB did not care to think seriously about the matter at all. It can be proved by the fact that during the last two years since the party congress the PB neither produced a single document on reorganisation nor a single circular on tech methods for the ranks nor demanded organisational reports from the PCs; consequently no PC, except the Andhra PC, sent any organisational reports to the PB. The PB in its one long session of about three months at the end of 1948 could find time to produce hundreds of pages on other issues (produced voluminous documents on PCJ, Acharya and others) but not a document on organisation. The PB made a pitiful attempt at the fag end to produce one, a PBM produced notes for the draft after the PB meeting was over, which was not elaborated later, but was put in cold storage.

This is not accidental. There are very deep-seated causes for it. In the days of right-reformism the party organisation was built up which was suited for peaceful work and parliamentary opposition, not for leading militant class struggles. With the advent of fascist repression after the

second party congress, this reformist organisation began to crumble. The PB instead of realising the state of the party organisation and making serious efforts to adopt suitable forms of organisation, not only allowed the things to take their own course but also imposed new adventurist organisational methods on the party which helped the job of the counterrevolutionary government to smash our party. The PB imagining insurrection round the corner, goaded the party ranks and cadre to carry on virtually legalistic methods of organisation under the threat of damning them as cowards, saboteurs, etc. on the one hand and waving the rod of discipline on the other. This enforcement of discipline as great Lenin points out, is nothing but "phrasemongering and grimacing".

The basic reasons of all this organisational bungling and antiparty methods of organisation, apart from others, is due to the fact that the PB does not realise the importance of the role of organisation for the successful building of a revolutionary movement and leading the revolution to success. It has an oversimplified formula of crisis-upsurge-revolution; which in practice means in the period of crisis there must be automatic upsurge and then automatic strike struggles and revolution; no necessity of a well-disciplined and steeled party and mass organisations. Hence adventurist calls for strikes, continuation of the old legalistic methods of functioning in face of white terror. To continue the same old legalistic methods of organisation and not realising the necessity of illegal methods suited to the conditions of white terror is nothing but the nonrealisation of the role of organisation and deifying spontaneity from another end. Right-reformism derided spontaneous mass upsurge and sabotaged mass struggles under the plea of organisational unpreparedness. Left-sectarianism deified spontaneous upsurge and sabotaged mass struggles from the other end, without caring for building illegal organisations at all. While right-reformism counterposed organisation to mass upsurge, left-sectarianism did the reverse, producing the same vicious effects from opposite end. Let



us see what Lenin had said with regard to this, when he was criticising the early social-democrats who had no conception of illegal work and who played into the hands of tsarist police.

"We must now deal with the question that has undoubtedly arisen in the mind of every reader. Have these primitive methods, which are a complaint of growth affecting the whole of the movement, any connection with economism, which is only one of the tendencies in Russian social-democracy? We think that they have. The lack of practical training, the lack of ability to carry on organisational work is certainly common to us all, including those who have stood unswervingly by the point of view of revolutionary Marxism from the very outset. And, of course, no one can blame the practical workers for their lack of practical training. But the term 'primitive methods' embraces something more than mere lack of training: it means the restrictedness of revolutionary work generally, the failure to understand that a good organisation of revolutionaries cannot be built upon the basis of such restricted work, and lastly—and most important—it means the attempts to justify this restrictedness and to elevate it to a special 'theory', i.e. bowing in worship to spontaneity in this matter also. As soon as such attempts were observed, it became certain that primitive methods are connected with economism and that we shall never eliminate this restrictedness of our organisational activity until we eliminate economism generally (i.e. the narrow conception of Marxian theory, of the role of social-democracy and of its political tasks). And these attempts were revealed in a twofold direction. Some began to say: the labour masses themselves have not yet brought forward the broad and militant political tasks that the revolutionaries desire to 'impose' upon them; they must continue for the time being to fight for immediate political demands, to conduct 'the economic struggle against the employers and the government' (and, naturally corresponding to this struggle which is 'easily understood' by the mass movement there must be

an organisation that will be 'easily understood' by the most untrained youth). Others, far removed from 'gradualness', began to say: it is possible and necessary to 'bring about a political revolution', but this is no reason whatever for building a strong organisation of revolutionaries to train the proletariat in the steadfast and stubborn struggle. All we need do it to snatch up our old friend, the 'handy' wooden club. Speaking without metaphor it means—we must organise a general strike, or we must stimulate the spiritless progress of the labour movement by means of 'excitative terror'. Both these tendencies, the opportunist and the 'revolutionary', bow to the prevailing primitiveness; neither believes that it can be eliminated, neither understands our primary and most imperative practical task, namely, to establish an organisation of revolutionaries capable of maintaining the energy, the stability and continuity of the political struggle" (*What Is to Be done?*)

Apart from the petty-bourgeois vices, this nonrealisation of the role of organisation is at the root of the anti-party methods pursued by the PB during two years. Now let us go into the matter concretely.

(1) The CC is the highest unit inside the party subservient only to the party congress. The PB is a body elected by the CC to give regular guidance to the party units basing on the decisions of the CC and subject to the organisational discipline of the CC. The PB taking advantage of the illegal conditions has topsy-turveyed this important organisational principle of the party, virtually made the CC subservient to it. No proposal to reduce the CC and PB so as to make them effective functioning units under these conditions of illegality was put. On the other hand, while the PCs were being reorganised by the PB into smaller bodies, it did not consider the reorganisation of the CC under the plea that it is "elected by the second congress as the central leadership—organ of political unification—for leading the struggle against reformism to completion—the task is to activise it—to politically unify it" (Notes for the Draft Resolution on Organisation—by a PBM).

Let us see what efforts were made to "activise" and to "politically unify" the CC? It was suggested in casual talks at the time of the PB meeting of 1948 end, to function the CC in groups. It was attempted after the PB meeting to explain and get the three PB documents—Tactical Line, Agrarian Question and People's Democracy—accepted. Later postal functioning was attempted to get the opinions of the CCMs through circulating inner-CC documents. Even here not all the documents and letters of the CCMs and others were circulated. Only those who supported the PB's sectarian line and antiparty methods were circulated. Others were suppressed. For instance, while meticulous care was taken to circulate all the resolutions and opinions supporting the incorrect stand of the PB on the 9th March fiasco, the strong criticism of Ram (C. Rajeswara Rao) on the PB's stand and "General Secretary's Letter to Ranks", demanding a meeting of the PB and staying organisational decisions regarding the same was not circulated to CCMs (even some PBMs were not shown till after a very long time). While the resolution on Tamilnadu committee and a big document on people's democracy produced by a member of the TNPC secretariat and bulky "selfcritical" reports of that secretariat members running into tens of pages were circulated, the resolution of that secretariat on the failure of the 9th March railway strike was not circulated. The letter of R. P. Dutt mentioned earlier, giving a serious warning to the leadership of our party, was not circulated to some of the PBMs, not to speak of the CCMs. While Robi's (Bhowani Sen's) criticism on Andhra documents and on Ram's letters—written from time to time in which strong criticism was made regarding the politics and methods of PB—was circulated, Andhra documents and Ram's letters were not circulated. Innumerable examples of the type can be given.

Even the opinions of the CCMs on these inner-CC documents were not heeded. Circulation of inner-CC documents was resorted to mainly to gag and suppress opinion of the CCMs opposing the sectarian politics and practices

of the PB, and not to "activise" and "politically unify" the CC.

The treatment of the CCMs by the PB has been against the organisational principles of the party. The general secretary gave an ultimatum to a Bombay CCM either to accept the adventurist line of the PB on jail struggles or be prepared for disciplinary action. He asks one of the CCMs at Yeravda jail to keep a watch over a PBM, simply because he happened to violently disagree with the PB on jail and TU tactics. CCMs were bureaucratically removed from the CC by the PB, for example a Tamilnadu CCM, a Bengal CCM, etc. The PB has the right to take a precautionary measure for ensuring the safety of the party, but has no right to remove a CCM outright from the CC.

This way one CCM after another was badgered into submission and the CC, the highest authority of the party between two all-India party congresses, had been reduced to the position of subservience to the PB.

The main propounders of the left-sectarian line—B. T. Ranadive and Bhowani Sen—who had virtually usurped the entire functioning of the PB, resorted to above methods, i.e. avoiding a CC meeting and badgering the CCMs to submission one after another, because they were not sure of a majority in the CC for their left-sectarian adventurist line. Hence if a CC meeting had at all to be convened, to ensure the acceptance of the left-adventurist line of the PB, the majority of the CCMs had to be badgered into toeing the line of the PB in advance. Bhowani Sen made a frank admission of this before the CC meeting in course of his speech on his selfcritical report.

Thus the highest party unit inside the CPI had been disabled, the collective effort of the CC members to pool their experiences and to put their heads together and grapple with the serious problems facing the party had been obstructed and the party as a whole had been deprived of the collective leadership of the CC.

(2) The PB also did not function as a team. Out of 9 PBMs, 5 remained stuck up with the PCs and one in jail and even the rest of the PBMs did not function together. During these two years the full PB meeting was held only once. The normal method has been the general secretary consulting with whichever PBM he wanted to and carry on and later get the decisions okayed by the other PBMs. Immediately after the party congress when the general secretary was at the old town (Bombay) he used to consult the other PBM of that place (G. Adhikari), later after the Tactical Line i.e. the whole of 1949 it had become a two-man show of the general secretary and Bhowani Sen; later after the editorial of the information bureau organ and other documents of the Soviet writers on India began to come and Bhowani Sen began to take a firm stand against Ranadive, it became a one-man show. Even documents like Balabushevich's article on India were not circulated to the other PBMs for months together.

Along with this, another important point has to be noted. Everybody in the CC and PB except Ranadive and Bhowani Sen were charged with one or more of the following crimes—reformism, cowardice, betrayal and sabotage—at one time or the other. Only two of the entire party leadership 'stood out' as real Marxists and consistent revolutionaries.

No proper unit functioning and assignment of functions to individual PBMs were there. The rule of the messiah had come to stay. Whatever came out from the mouth and pen of the general secretary became Marxism. He became so much selfconceited that he began to produce big documents on every subject even without serious study.

The logic of left-sectarian politics and organisational methods reached a climax in this matter:

However this does not mean that for all the antiparty methods of the PB none except the general secretary is responsible. It means other individual PBMs have to bear the responsibility in varying degrees, which will be con-

cretely assessed in the individual selfcritical reports, and the general secretary has to bear the main responsibility, and Bhowani Sen comes next to him.

(3) The principle of criticism and selfcriticism was applied by the PB to everybody except itself. Certain members of the PB had become conceited against which Stalin had warned; "This danger (i.e. leaders separating themselves from the masses—CC) may result in the leaders becoming conceited and regarding themselves as infallible. And what good is it if the top leadership grows conceited and begins to look down on the masses? It is clear that nothing but disaster can come of this for the party" (15 July 1948, *Lasting Peace*—A. Pauker's article on the CP of Yugoslavia). The PB instead of going into its Himalayan blunders selfcritically and correcting itself, threw the entire blame for the fiascos committed by itself upon the lower committees and ranks. It refused to learn from the opinions, doubts, etc., sometimes raised from the wrong end even.

With utter contempt for the cadre and the masses and selfconceit, it disregarded them. On the other hand, charging them with reformism, cowardice, betrayal, etc. and threatening them with the rod of discipline, it intimidated them and extracted confessions which ran into hundreds of pages. Out of the innerparty material produced by the PB during these two years, this type of material consisting of nauseating and selfeffacing stories of "My Mistakes" (this does not mean all the comrades who gave selfcritical documents are right or all the charges of the PB on them are wrong, the purpose here is to lay bare the antiparty methods of the PB, of suppressing innerparty democracy) is a major part of the total material.

Taking advantage of the illegal condition of the party, those of the CCMs, PCMs and some others who differed with the PB line on some point or other were kept away from the field of their work—completely 'denified' for months together, thus shattering their resistance through

complete isolation. Some of the CCMs who dared to differ with the left-sectarian line of the PB were denied the right of getting inner-CC documents, even before any formal disciplinary action was taken against such a CCM, keeping him completely in the dark as to the happenings inside the CC and PB.

The PB thus adopting antiparty titoist methods and misusing the innerparty weapon of criticism and selfcriticism, suppressed all innerparty democracy, the rights of party members and healthy discussions.

The PB not only did not start an innerparty forum for carrying on discussions on political and other issues facing the movement, but also suppressed some of the important articles of Chinese communist leaders—Mao's article on people's democratic dictatorship was not published in the English organ, Liu Shao-chi's speech at the Peking conference was also not published—and erected a wall between them and the party ranks. The PB tried to reduce the party ranks to the position of obedient and blind order-carriers.

To give but a few examples to illustrate what has been mentioned above:

(a) The three documents of the PB—tactical line, agrarian question, people's democracy—suppressed all genuine doubts and suggestions about the party line from ranks and lower committees and a consistent left-sectarian line was worked out.

(b) The letter of the general secretary to ranks, charging everybody who raised doubts about the propriety of the decision of 9th March railway strike with reformism, cowardice, betrayal, etc., suppressing all criticism against the PB. It must be noted that immediately after the fiasco, a good section of the party ranks and the party committees held the view that the decision of 9th March was wrong. It was only after this letter was sent and all criticism suppressed and after some of the party committees which opposed the strike decision dealt very severely, that the thing was silenced.

(c) The first statement of the PB on the editorial of the organ of the information bureau, given in justification of its old sectarian line, which was rightly condemned by the entire party as a piece of selfjustification and later accepted by the PB itself as such.

(d) The treatment meted out to the PCs was, no better. In the days of reformism the then PB under the leadership of renegade Joshi used to keep the PCs in check by balancing between individuals and groups if any. The present PB under the leadership of Ranadive set itself the task of not only balancing between individuals and groups to push through its sectarian politics but also to disrupt the PCs. The PB dissolved some of them and "reorganised" them with those whom the PB considered fit to push through its antiparty line and methods. This does not mean that all the "reorganised" PCs or all the members whom the PB had taken in fulfilled its expectations.

The case of Tamilnadu PC secretariat is the best example in this matter. The members of the Tamilnadu PC secretariat were called, individually badgered into submission with the help of the PBM from Tamilnadu (N. K. Krishnan) and after that only those in whom the PB had confidence of fully kowtowing to the PB line were taken in. The rest were kept outside their own province.

The case of Andhra secretariat needs special mention. It had been consistently fighting for a correct line not only since the second party congress but even before that and had been criticising the PB's wrong politics, directives and organisational practices from time to time. Hence the PB could not tolerate such a committee. At first it tried to find out some weak spots inside it and disrupt it. Having failed in it, the two big men of the PB, Ranadive and Bhowani Sen, decided on their own to separate the Hyderabad state committee from the Andhra PC and established direct contact with the Hyderabad city committee which had been moving on a factional line refusing to accept the line of armed struggle of the PC and carrying its old reformist line under the cover of left-sectarian



phrases of the PB. Of course the state committee refused to fall in line with this line of the PB. An attempt to set up the Andhra student fraction against the PC secretariat was also made. Many more other pinpricks need not be mentioned here. All this was at a time when the enemy had concentrated tens of thousands of armed forces in Telangana and Madras part of the Andhra to wipe out our revolutionary liberation movement and the Andhra PC was leading the Telangana struggle and extending it to ever new areas against all odds. These factional attempts at disruption of the movement were carried on without intimating a word to the Andhra PBM and without the least consideration for the movement. For a selfconceited petty-bourgeois individualist, the movement does not matter; it is sufficient if his ego is satisfied. The PB had prepared everything to suppress the PC secretariat, even circulated to CCMs an adverse note written by Bhowani Sen on the Andhra documents without circulating the documents themselves. Meanwhile the editorial of the organ of the information bureau appeared and saved the situation. Otherwise nobody can say what further damage would have been done to the Telangana and Andhra armed struggle and the liberation movement of India as a whole.

Other PCs, though they were not as bold as the Andhra PC to come out against the left-sectarian line of the PB, they too began raising doubts from their practical experiences. Hence the PB had lost confidence that it could convince the PCs and adopted an organisational trick. It violated an important organisational principle of communist parties and the very constitution of the CPI adopted at the second congress that, "the fraction is completely controlled by the corresponding party committee" though not in words but in practice, and attempted to make the fractions of mass organisations virtually independent of the respective party committees and reduce the PCs and other committees to the status of post-offices of the PB. In this connection another relevant point needs to be mentioned. The general secretary while threatening the UP

PC secretariat for not translating and duplicating the bulky documents—including hundreds of pages so-called selfcritical reports, declared that it is the only PC which fails to translate and duplicate for the ranks hundreds of pages of the stuff produced by the PB and has no right to exist as a PC.

Now coming to the point, the PB began its experiment with the student front which came in handy. A call for building a strong AISF fraction for giving "firm centralised guidance" to the student fractions and cells was given in the "PB Note on Student Struggles".

"The immediate task before the fraction is to coordinate the activity of the AISF under firm centralised guidance, (2) for this purpose to ideologically unify first the leadership over all the provinces by constantly checking that all the units are implementing the accepted party line, (3) by constantly guiding them and being in live contact with the developing struggles, (4) raising its own and the ideological level of the provincial and district leaders on the basis of Marxism-Leninism, (b) centralise and unify the movement by ruthlessly fighting all treachery and sabotage, all manifestations of reformism and ruthlessly ejecting from positions all those guilty of hardened reformism, or who neglect Marxist study, (5) to lay down the task of the all-India movement and the tasks of each province, to decide help in giving a bold lead to the student struggles, to raise them to higher level and make them an integral part of the struggle for people's democratic revolution led by the party, (6) to give up all reformist organisational methods, study and adopt accepted revolutionary forms of organisation of the movement, (b) to study from the masses new forms of resistance and develop them..."

These are the tasks given to the AISF fraction. Whether any tasks given to the PCs? None at all! While meticulous care was taken to write out such a small detail that "no member of the provincial fraction to be removed from the student front without the consent of the AISF frac-

tion" and "organisational work of the provincial fraction—formation of district fraction, district functioning to be closely checked by the AISF fraction", no directive was given to the PCs. The meaning is obvious.

The note of the PB asks the AISF fraction to "draw a list of say 100 students in the country—including all top leaders of the fraction and these will be put through a correspondent course (!)".

The AISF fraction tries to put this directive of post-box schools into practice. Nothing happened in spite of repeated reminders and calls. Can the organisational bankruptcy of the PB go any further?

Suppose if all the other all-India fractions also are put on the same rails as the AISF, what is to be the job of the PCs except acting as post-offices of PB and its all-India fractions? Obviously if this was not checked, in course of time the PCs would have been reduced to the status of post-offices. Incidentally this can be compared with the big bourgeoisie attempting to reduce the provincial governments to the status of municipalities. The PB starting from disrupting, suppressing and "reorganising" the PCs, ended in making them into post-offices.

(5) The PB practised favouritism and introduced double-standard of treatment of comrades inside the party. To give a few instances, an important tech comrade was involved in a certain manipulation of accounts. A central committee member was also in the same den and when the tech comrade asked his advice, he acquiesced in the matter. While action against the tech comrade was taken and the thing was circulated to the PCs in a long document, the CCM concerned was not even censured.

A certain PBM of Yeravda was singled out for attack, because he refused to submit to the browbeating of the PB and opposed, in his own way, the tactics of the PB on TU and jail issues, though other CCMs have not done less "crimes" in the eyes of the PB. Not only that, the general

secretary wrote to another CCM in the jail to keep watch over him.

(6) The left-sectarian PB began to speak everything in the name of working class and the toiling masses and began to dub comrades coming from other classes, if they raise any doubts about the sectarian line and tactics of the PB, as petty-bourgeois funks or kulak-small-nation chauvinists etc. While right-reformists brought in class discrimination stealthily inside the party and did nothing to educate and promote proletarian cadre, the left-sectarianism brought in class discrimination from the other end under the cover of revolutionary slogans like "proletarianise the party". Though certain comrades coming from proletariat and other toiling classes were promoted to leading positions, nothing was done to educate them. On the other hand their worst sentiments were roused against the comrades coming from the other classes. In the matter of jail struggles the issue of classification was made an issue of petty-bourgeoisie vs proletariat and peasants, simply because most of the comrades coming from petty-bourgeois class were put in class I and others in class II and some comrades coming from the petty-bourgeoisie had treated comrades from toiling classes badly and cared more for their petty facilities than for the unity and honour of our party. In the end when it was found that the demand for abolition of classification could not be won in the Bombay jails, the general secretary even suggested to a CCM in Yeravda jail, that we might have to discard class I on our own. This has nothing to do with the ideology of the proletariat, but equalitarianism of a petty-bourgeois-anarchist who does not know how to fight the social system based on inequality. Because of the wrong twist given to the revolutionary slogan of proletarianising the party, making the issue of classification in jails an issue of petty bourgeois vs proletariat and peasants etc., a gulf is being created between comrades coming from the working class and peasantry and comrades coming from petty-bourgeois and

other classes. This has expressed itself in its crassest form in Bengal where the party is very seriously faced with this problem.

(7) Because of continuing the old legalistic methods of functioning in face of white terror, adopting methods of slave-driving the cadre and party ranks into adventurist actions under the threat of disciplinary action, resulted in the loss of huge number of cadres and left the party in a state of liquidation without either proper illegal tech apparatus or functioning cells and other units.

(8) The selfconceit of the PB—mainly the general secretary—is not confined to the boundaries of India. Under the apparently revolutionary slogan of "We must state emphatically that the CPI has accepted Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin as authoritative sources of Marxism. It has not discovered new sources of Marxism beyond these" (Tactical Line), the PB under the leadership of the general secretary had been pursuing a bourgeois-nationalist anti-international masked-titoite policy. It proceeded with titoite arrogance not only to refuse to learn from the rich revolutionary experiences of brother parties but also to slander them and their leaders as reformists and ventured to 'correct' them. By this it sought to drive a wedge between the international communist movement and the CPI.

It pitted Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin against Mao. Not satisfied with that, it bracketed Mao with the arch-enemies of the proletariat and renegades like Tito, Browder, etc., and brought grist to the mill of imperialists and their lackeys who were spreading slander against Mao as eastern Tito and made the leadership of the CPI a butt of ridicule in the eyes of the world progressive forces and communist fraternity.

The slander campaign against the CPGB and its leader, Palme Dutt, who had been helping our party since its inception, reached its worst. A systematic gossipmongering had been carried on by some PBMs and CCMs among

middle cadres, through whom it had reached the ranks, that the CPGB is utter reformist and it has misled the CPI several times into the reformist mire as if the CPI would have achieved its object but for this "intervention" on the part of the CPGB. This slander campaign reached its zenith with a pamphlet published by the People's Publishing House, under the instructions of the general secretary, containing the correspondence between the Australian Communist Party and the CPGB. This pamphlet contains an arrogant introduction the essence of which is that the leadership of the CPGB is refusing selfcriticism while pursuing a reformist policy.

The CPGB in the beginning sent us some of their leaders who taught us elementary Marxism and communist trade-union work, and since then has been regularly helping us with political guidance. Palme Dutt, in spite of his preoccupation with the problems of Great Britain and its party, has been taking special interest on the problems of India and the CPI, and teaching us to apply Marxism to Indian conditions through his books on India.

A series of editions of Palme Dutt's book *India Today* is the only authoritative book till today on Indian national-liberation movement, on which the party ranks and leadership are being educated. The leadership of the CPI could do the least in this direction. Whatever it has done is arrant nonsense, for example, *Agrarian Question* by the PB. At times political differences might have arisen between the CPGB and the CPI. But it is sheer foolishness to embark upon this type of slander campaign without waiting to look back how on so many critical occasions the CPGB and Palme Dutt had corrected us—the Three Party Letter of 1933, Dutt-Bradley Thesis of 1936, CPGB's letters of 1941 after Hitler's attack on the Soviet Union, Palme Dutt's criticism regarding our wrong stand with regard to the Muslim League and finally his letter of warning to an Andhra comrade in 1949.

By its slander campaign against the CPGB and Palme

Dutt, the PB has done great harm to the cause of Indian revolution. It has helped objectively the British imperialists, the common enemy of both, by driving a wedge between the British working class and Indian masses. It is indispensable for the revolutionary movement of India that closest possible ties are forged between the CPGB and the CPI and fraternal political help is secured from the CPGB and specially from Palme Dutt.

In the same way gossipmongering had been carried on against other brother parties and their leaders.

It is really a pity that a comrade like Adhikari who has been a member of our central committee since its inception had also fallen a victim to such gossipmongering started by the general secretary. Adhikari, in his self-critical report has made a frank admission in this regard:

"The masked titote trend expressed itself in a specific theory, which was never put down on paper up to that time but was widely gossiped among PBMs and certain CCMs as well and also among leading cadres since the party congress. The postulates of this thesis were as follows:

"(a) After the end of the second world war there was a recrudescence of revisionism in a number of important communist parties of the world (as at the end of the first world war) which expressed itself in the repudiation of the dictatorship of the proletariat (statements of Thorez, Gottwald, Dimitrov, Pollitt, etc. of 1947 were hinted at).

"(b) Inside the CPI such a trend of course dominated up to the end of 1947. But from 1947 'Marxist-Leninist' trend inside the CPI took up the fight against the 'right-reformist revisionist' trend and vanquished it at the second congress. This 'Marxist-Leninist' trend had achieved this victory and had come to the 'correct' Marxist-Leninist line for the new stage of the Indian revolution almost on its own without any direct help of the leadership of the international communist movement and almost simultaneously with the inaugural meeting of the information bureau.

"(c) We accept the authority of Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin and the CPSU(B) and none else.

"These were the postulates of a theory which was being popularised among leading comrades since the second party congress in private gossip. A systematic slander of the leaders of the important communist parties of Europe, and of Mao—by indirect innuendoes and suggestions was a feature of the gossip in the central dens since the end of the party congress right from the second congress to the middle of 1949 and later. Ranadive is the originator and proponent of this theory and used to initiate such gossip. I became a supporter of this theory under Ranadive's influence already in the days when I was making the turn from my utter right-reformism, and from my conciliation to Joshism. I also used to participate in this slanderous gossip."

Later the general secretary advanced a step further and produced an article called "Revisionism", criticised the other brother parties who had carried on heroic fight against fascism during the second world war and rallying crores of people against Anglo-American imperialist domination—some parties indirectly and some others directly—assuming the pose of Lenin to save the world communist movement from reformism, and throwing the very principles regarding the fraternal relations between communist parties to winds, not to speak of anti-Marxist politics pursued by the PB. Curiously enough no PBM objected to this atrocious article; some of them even approved it as a great Marxist contribution.

See the choicest piece of that atrocious article:

"Revisionist tendencies, however, once more began to appear, often to an alarming degree, in a number of parties. The end of the antifascist war saw the accumulated effect of the gradual accretion of revisionist influence. In a number of parties, some leaders took up an openly revisionist attitude, repudiating the central propositions of Marxism-Leninism, under the guise of seeking new 'national' forms of preaching socialism. Thus leaders of a



number of parties in Europe made statements about the dictatorship of the proletariat not being necessary, being an outmoded conception..."

This bourgeois-nationalist anti-international line of the PB had landed it in suppressing international documents and distortion of the very teachings of our great teachers, behind whom the PB tried to hide its ugly head to attack and slander other brother parties and their leaders. This proves that the PB's slogan of not recognising anybody except Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin is not merely an attempt at reducing the living Marxism to a dogma but also a cover to carry on its anti-Marxist politics.

The PB starting from censoring the articles of the Chinese Communist Party leaders, ended in censoring the information bureau itself (not publishing of "People's Democratic Dictatorship" of Mao, Liu Shao-chi's article on "Internationalism and Nationalism" and his speech at the Peking conference which were published in the organ of the information bureau) and delaying the publication of Peking manifesto, editorial of the organ of the information bureau etc. while at the same time publishing Stalin's speech at the University of the Toilers of the East with a misleading note in justification of the left-sectarian line of the PB.

The distortion of Zhdanov's report to the nine parties' conference in the PB's document on "People's Democracy" written in 1948, is another glaring example apart from the one mentioned above in relation to the publication of Stalin's speech to the University of the Toilers of the East in the English weekly with a misleading introductory note. Quotations regarding postwar international situation and people's democracy were taken and outright distortion was made to suit the sectarian line of the PB. Quotations from Lenin were given to prove that capitalist relations have become dominant in agriculture in India, in the document on "Agrarian Question". To give long quotations from classics and to distort them had become a common practice during the last two years.

Suppression of the reports and resolutions of the seventh congress of the CI and Stalin's teachings regarding colonial revolutions—especially Chinese revolution—was also done because they would not suit the left-sectarian line of the PB.

The bourgeois-nationalist anti-international, attitude and suppression and distortion of the teachings of our great teachers is not a particular feature of the left-sectarian period alone. It is a long-standing disease with the leadership of our party. Recollect how in the days of reformism the then PB under the leadership of Joshi took a bourgeois-nationalist attitude towards the problem of war on Soviet Union, the fatherland of the world proletariat, and how the war was characterised as an imperialist war even after Hitler's attack on the Soviet Union, how references to the reactionary nature of Gandhism were deleted unscrupulously from Stalin's 16th party congress report. Here is a passage from Adhikari's outspoken selfcritical report:

"(a) I wrote articles extolling the progressive role of Gandhism in the *National Front*—"Heritage We Carry Forward (1938); "Gandhism—A Review" (1940).

"(b) In the PB of 1936 I was party to the line of R. D. Bharadwaj's article in *Congress Socialist* which took a bourgeois-nationalist stand on the question of our attitude on contingency of a fascist attack on the USSR.

"(c) After the fascist attack on the USSR in June 1941 I initiated in the then PB the bourgeois-nationalist line of continuing to regard the war as an imperialist war and resisted any change despite hints from Deoli jail sent by Ranadive, until their full document reached us simultaneously with CPGB documents in November end 1941.

"(d) In the war period, as has been pointed out I was the initiator of the rabid bourgeois-nationalist deviation in applying Lenin-Stalin teachings to the question of Pakistan and national question in India—I together with the old PB (1945-46) disregarded the clear hint against our wrong line contained in Dyakov's article and joined with

Ranadive in writing a letter to Dange then in London, asking him to write to *New Times* not to publish such articles or something of that sort.

"(e) In the same period I was guilty of deleting from Stalin's 16th party congress report a reference to Gandhi—which has been condemned in the second congress self-critical report. It showed how low I had sunk in the period of right-reformist-groveling before bourgeois-nationalist leader and repudiating the great leader of the international workers' movement—leader of all progressive humanity."

This long-standing disease of bourgeois-nationalist anti-international attitude which is common to both reformism and sectarianism has corroded our party very deeply. A conscious, uncompromising and steadfast struggle has to be waged against this disease if our party has to get rid of it once for all.

(9) The PB's titoist methods finally landed the general secretary in the distorting of the history of our party, in spite of the international documents regarding the same. We cannot go into all the details of the twisting of the history of the party. We will go into one salient point as an example. The general secretary in his document "PB Note on Tamilnadu" dated 18 August 1949, regarding the period 1930-34 of our party history writes thus:

"In Bombay left-congressism was given up and proletariat entered into a fight against the bourgeois political movement—in 1930. There were sectarian mistakes in approach etc. but basically it was correct to expose and unmask. The bourgeoisie threw itself against the new force with all its full force and resources, temporarily isolated the communists from the working class itself—yet communist cadres were born and within a couple of years all lost ground recovered. So quick was the recovery that Gandhi's meeting in 1931 could be captured."

"Yet the petty-bourgeois congressism decried this as sectarian and made it a cardinal principle to repudiate

this past, this formation of proletarian party—foundation of Joshism. In this they primarily based themselves on the vacillating class petty bourgeoisie which was equated with the people.”

Here we are not concerned about the evaluation of that period by Joshian reformism. We are interested, in only showing how the evaluation of the general secretary of that period is in contradiction with that of the documents of the Communist International.

If it is only a question of “sectarian mistakes in approach etc. but basically correct...” why the three parties—Chinese, German and British CPs—had to address an open letter to Indian communists in 1933? Why the seventh congress of the CI had to make a special mention of the sectarian mistakes of the CPI in Wang Ming’s report on colonial liberation movements? Compare the above para with what is written in Wang Ming report:

“Our comrades in India have suffered for a long time from ‘left’-sectarian errors: they did not participate in all the mass demonstrations organised by the National Congress or organisations affiliated with it. At the same time, the Indian communists did not possess sufficient forces independently to organise a really powerful mass anti-imperialist movement. Therefore the Indian communists until very recently were to a considerable extent isolated from the mass of the people, from the mass anti-imperialist struggle. The toiling masses of India could not be convinced of the fact that the communists not only really desire to struggle themselves, but can also lead the millions in a struggle against the principal mortal enemy of the Indian people—British imperialism. In this connection for a long time the small, scattered groups of communists could not become a united, mass all-Indian communist party. By their sectarian policy and isolation from the mass anti-imperialist movement, these small communist groups objectively helped to retain the influence of Gandhism and national reformism over the

masses. It was only recently that the all-Indian Communist Party, which has already taken shape, began to rid itself of its sectarian errors and made the first steps towards the creation of an anti-imperialist united front. Nevertheless, our young Indian comrades, having taken this road, showed a great lack of understanding of the united front tactics. This may be borne out even by the fact that our Indian comrades in attempting to establish a united anti-imperialist front with the National Congress in December of last year put before the latter such demands as 'the establishment of an Indian Workers' and Peasants' Soviet Republic', 'confiscation of all lands belonging to the zamindars (landowners) without compensation', 'a general strike as the only effective programme of action', etc. Such demands on the part of our Indian comrades can serve as an example of how not to carry on the tactics of the anti-imperialist united front...

"In the interests of the further successful struggle against British imperialism, the Indian communists must put a decisive stop to sectarianism and must actively participate in the mass anti-imperialist movement. The Indian communists should in no case disregard work within the National Congress and the national-revolutionary and national-reformist organisations affiliated with it, maintaining at the same time their complete political and organisational independence. Both within and without the National Congress the Indian communists must consolidate all the genuine anti-imperialist forces of the country, broadening and leading the struggle of the masses against the imperialist oppressors."

In this connection one fact needs special mention. The PB in its various documents has time and again made reference to the thesis and programme of the sixth congress of the Communist International. It is good that it has done so and nobody can find anything wrong in it. But how is it that in course of its two and a half years' of functioning the PB did hardly refer to the valuable reports and resolutions of the seventh congress of the Communist

International? While the PB got the thesis and the programme of the sixth congress printed and circulated to the ranks, and rightly so, how is it that it did not think it necessary to get the various reports and resolutions of the seventh congress printed and circulated?

Such withholding of the seventh congress reports etc. from the ranks can only be explained by the fact that the seventh congress dealt a mortal blow to the left-sectarianism in a thoroughgoing manner and the left-sectarian PB did not think it to the advantage of the line it pursued to popularise the precious documents of the historic seventh congress of the Communist International.

(10) While the attitude of the PB and mainly of the general secretary towards the world communist parties is hostile, what is his attitude to renegades and spies? See the tone of the general secretary's statement on the resolution of the information bureau on Yugoslav CP! While the resolution of the information bureau, and the resolutions of the other communist parties unequivocally condemn the renegades of the leadership of the Yugoslav CP, the general secretary praises the past "heroic role" of those enemies of the working class and spies of the imperialists. The whole tone of the statement is that of persuasion of a misguided revolutionary, and not condemnation in sharp terms of a renegade who deserted the camp of socialism to that of imperialists.

With the "great shock" he had got with the defection of the Yugoslav renegade, he appeals thus:

"The leaders of the Yugoslav Communist Party, regarded as the fighting symbol of a people taking rapid strides to socialism, drew respect and admiration from communists in all countries.

"In our country, our party had consistently broadcast the story of the heroic fight and achievements of the Yugoslav people. At the second congress of our party the delegates from Yugoslavia who attended the session drew a tumultuous applause, next only to that given to the Soviet Union."

It is true that the general secretary supported the stand of the information bureau, but it loses its meaning in the background of the tone of persuasion. Most of the comrades felt this statement to be bad at that time, but those who dared to express against it got a kick.

This same liberal attitude to the Yugoslav renegades continued even after. The present editor of the central legal organ continued to be representative of the Yugoslav renegade Tanjug news agency long after Yugoslavia was thrown out of the information bureau. It was only after the intervention from abroad that the thing was stopped and open declaration to that effect made in our legal organ.

While neither the information bureau nor the other brother CPs cared to publish the rag of the reply of Yugoslav leadership to the resolution of the information bureau, PHQ in Bombay duplicated that reply and circulated to the ranks while the general secretary was at Bombay at that time. The PB was so blind to this that it had to be reminded of this by the ranks after the editorial of the information bureau.

Full one year after the information bureau's resolution one of the PHQ staff at Bombay had a talk with two members of the Yugoslav trade delegation somewhere outside and later when one of them visited the PHQ at Bombay attempts were made to win him over instead of showing him the door. The general secretary knowing this neither proposed any action nor reported it to the PB, till somebody brought the matter up.

The general secretary is personally responsible for all the above because he was in charge of the PHQ at Bombay.

Even after the open warning of the information bureau about the activities of the Yugoslav spies in India, nothing was done. No serious note of the warning was taken by the PB.

It has now come to light that the Yugoslav renegades who attended our second party congress played a significant part in the amending of our political thesis further

in the direction of sectarianism. The renegade Kardelj's book *Problems of International Development* was printed and widely circulated as an authoritative book on postwar international situation. It is very strange that not one CCM has raised this matter and demanded selfcriticism after the information bureau's resolution on Yugoslav renegades was published. This shows to what extent bourgeois-nationalism had corroded the party.

### *Individual Responsibility of the PBMs*

The PB as a whole is responsible for the abovestated crimes. But this does not mean either that every member of the PB is responsible for all of them or in the same degree taking each crime singly. The members of the PB are responsible for different crimes in different degrees.

A polit bureau of nine comrades was elected at the time of the second congress by the central committee.

B. T. Ranadive is responsible for all the abovestated crimes, not only in the political sense of the term as the initiator, executor and dogged defender of the trotskyite-titoite type of left-sectarian political line which is the basis for those titoite methods of organisation, but also in the practical sense of the term as the initiator and executor of those crimes.

Bhowani Sen, though not the initiator of those crimes, is one of the abettors of Ranadive in his left-sectarian line and titoite methods of organisation. He is not personally responsible for all those crimes. But his responsibility as the chief abettor in the suppression of the CC and badgering of the CCMs into submission, nonfunctioning of the PB, suppression and disruption of the PCs has to be specially noted. He is not personally responsible for suppression of the international documents, incidents in the Bombay PHQ like circulation of Yugoslav renegades' slanderous reply to the information bureau's resolution etc., distortion of party history, favouritism and double standards.



G. Adhikari is also one of the abettors of Ranadive in his left-sectarian line and titoite organisational methods. He is not personally responsible for the suppression of the CC, nonfunctioning of the PB, suppression and disruption of the PCs, favouritism and double standards. But he bears the main responsibility in aiding Ranadive in suppressing the international documents and the distortion of the teachings of our great teachers and party history.

Somnath Lahiri, from a reformist outlook, had, in the beginning, doubts about the tactical line. This was realised by the general secretary and Bhowani Sen who considered him an utter reformist not to be relied upon to push through the left-sectarian line and titoite methods of the two leaders of the PB (Bhowani Sen and the general secretary). This is accepted by Bhowani Sen in his speech on his selfcritical report. It was for this reason that he was virtually reduced by the PB to the position of a PC member and there too to take the responsibility of technical-organisational matters only, like tech and special. Under the circumstances he had not much to do with the functioning of the PB and with its methods. But gradually he began to grow into an ardent convert to the left-sectarian line, in cases going even to more extremes than some others viz his stand on Sarat Bose election, on the April shootings in Calcutta, in his suggestions for adventurist actions against the police, etc. However he lacked both the conceit and the conviction (for the left-sectarian line) which the PB leaders possessed and, as late as July 1949, had offered to resign from the PB.

It is not possible here to assess in full his responsibilities in relation to his work in the PC. But it is clear that though he was not put in the PC to give political guidance (that was Bhowani Sen's job) yet, as a member of the PB attached to the PC, he is politically responsible for the crass adventurist policy of the PC. He is also responsible for the antiparty organisational methods practised by the PC, some of which he put into practice himself and some of which he acquiesced in. The only extenuating factor is

that he was to some extent a victim of the PB leaders and in that sense had to force himself to quickly conform to the PB's line and methods. However he continued to be looked upon with suspicion by Ranadive and more victimisation was in store for him—as is shown by the extraction by the general secretary of bogus confessions from N. K. Krishnan alleging Lahiri's factional 'conspiracies' at the time of the second party congress. This extracted 'allegation' against Lahiri was kept hidden away by the general secretary obviously to be used against Lahiri at the next opportunity.

N. K. Krishnan also has been a virtual PCM for the last two years except for brief periods when he was at the centre. Hence he had not much to do with the titoite methods of the PB, except for the anti-international attitude and slandermongering against the international parties and their leaders which he admitted in this speech on his selfcriticism. But he wobbled on the issue of 9th March, took an opportunist stand with regard to the PB's resolution dissolving the Tamilnadu PC secretariat and acted as the main instrument of the PB in liquidating the party and the mass movement in Tamilnadu by using titoite-turkish methods. The details could be got in his selfcritical report.

C. Rajeswara Rao also functioned as a virtual PCM except for the brief period at the time of the PB meeting which took place at the end of 1948. He is not responsible for any of the abovestated crimes of the PB, except for making an opportunist surrender in accepting the three PB documents, which gave the PB a green signal to embark upon adventurist tactics on all fronts. But within a couple of months after his going to his province, he raised controversy on almost all the main points of the PB documents and has been continuously writing on them basing both on the experience of the mass movement and the international documents. He, supported by PC secretariat, had been opposing vigorously the titoist organisational methods of the PB, in the matter of suppressing and

liquidating provincial committees, intimidating the ranks by labelling them as 'cowards', 'betrayers' etc. and brandishing against them the rod of discipline. He wrote a letter on the issue of 9th March debacle, in which the selfjustificatory and abusive letter of the general secretary to the ranks on it was severely condemned, all disciplinary actions—particularly re: Tamilnadu PC secretariat—were demanded to be stopped, and an immediate PB meeting was demanded. Later he refused to be cowed down in spite of all the PCs—including Tamilnadu PC secretariat—falling in line with the PB's sectarian line on this issue. All his letters to the PB were suppressed and were not circulated to the CCMs and even to some of the PBMs.

He and the Andhra secretariat, while conducting Telangana armed struggle and extending it to newer and newer areas, had been unified and prepared the party in Andhra to a final showdown against the trotskyite political line and titoite methods of the PB. All these details can be seen in his selfcritical report.

With regard to the other three PBMs who are or were in jail, another PB member from Andhra. Chandram, had been one of the votaries of the first Andhra document of 1948 in which all the fundamental issues on the strategy and tactics were raised. Immediately after the document was drafted, he was caught and sent to prison. Even from the jail, with the meagre material at his disposal, he has been opposing the left-sectarian politics and titoite methods of the PB. He has no part in any of the crimes of the PB.

Another PBM, A. K. Ghosh, had also not opposed the sectarian analysis regarding the state and strategy of the revolution and wrong perspective of the PB regarding the growth of our revolution. He had opposed the titoist methods of the PB. He opposed the trade-union tactics of the PB as adventurist. He wrote out a critical note on this issue, which was suppressed by the general secretary and was not circulated to CCMs. He submitted his resignation of the membership of the PB and jail committee protesting

against the antiparty methods of the PB in the matter of jail struggles in Bombay presidency. He is victim of the PB's titoite methods.

Another PBM, S. S. Yusuf, was inside jail during the last two years and has nothing to do with the titoite methods of the PB. Because he has not written anything to the PB, nothing is definitely known about his political views.

### *PB after the Editorial of the Information Bureau's Organ*

After the editorial of the information bureau organ, Peking manifesto and Liu Shao-chi's speech at the Peking conference, and the documents of the comrades of the CPSU(B) even, the PB as a whole—with a few exceptions—remained sunk deep in left-sectarianism, refused to see that it had committed fundamental left-sectarian mistakes, had brought the party to the verge of destruction by left-sectarian line and titoist methods and had even gone to the extent of not only slandering brother parties and their leaders but also distorting the teachings of Lenin and Stalin. The most "atrocious" thing was that B. T. Ranadive "discovered" in the Peking manifesto "an atrocious formulation" in calling upon the working class to rally the national bourgeoisie (i.e. the middle bourgeoisie—CC) and saw a correction of it in the editorial of the information bureau organ. Rajeswara Rao who had been fighting against the left-sectarian line of the PB and for a correct line did not come to the party centre by that time. Bhowani Sen was the only PBM among those at the centre at that time who first saw—though vaguely and not with deep understanding—that the PB's line was fundamentally wrong. He was the comrade among those at the centre who first brought to the notice of the PB the seriousness of the situation and tried his best to make sense to the other PBMs at the centre. The rest of the PBMs—Adhikari, Lahiri and N. K. Krishnan—were also not realising the

seriousness of the mistakes and crimes of the PB. The result was the first selfjustificatory statement of the PB to the ranks on the editorial of the information bureau organ which sought to explain away the fundamental political mistakes and titoist crimes of the PB only as "tactical errors", "lag" between the "immense possibilities" and the "actual achievements", under cover of the formal acceptance of the editorial; and which got the universal condemnation from the party ranks. Even Bhowani Sen who had brought out the seriousness and the fundamental nature of the mistakes of the PB also voted for this statement, because his understanding too was not yet deep.

Basing on this sandy foundation the PB embarked upon producing different documents without making a sharp, deep and comprehensive criticism of the PB's sectarian line. These documents attempted to give a positive lead, while making a piecemeal and superficial criticism of left-sectarianism. These are:

(a) "Main Features of the Indian People's Democratic Struggles and the Main Tasks of Communist Party"—by Bhowani Sen.

(b) Resolution on "People's Democracy"—by Bhowani Sen.

(c) Resolution on PB's Criticism of Comrade Mao—by Adhikari.

(d) Tactics on the Workingclass Front—by Lahiri.

(e) Resolution on "Agrarian Question"—by B. T. Ranadive.

All except the last document were circulated to the CC members.

By this time, i.e. April first week, Rajeswara Rao also reached the party centre. Here one thing needs mention. Krishnan was granted leave because of his ill-health and hence he has not been participating in the PB meetings. After this the PB began discussing the abovementioned documents and adopted the documents on "Main Features", criticism of Mao, people's democracy, with certain amendments. The document on trade-union tactics was discussed

and it was decided to redraft it, which Lahiri subsequently did. Document on agrarian question was rejected. Rajeswara Rao prepared a document on jail struggle, which was not discussed by the PB for lack of time.

By this time the PB had realised, because of the sharp criticism from the ranks and the cadre of the PB's statement on the information bureau's editorial, that not only its political capacity but also its very bonafides are also in question. Hence it decided to undo the harm done by its abovementioned statement to the ranks. It drafted an appeal in which it accepted that it had committed fundamental trotskyite left-sectarian mistakes, assured the ranks that it will not maintain any titoite opposition to international communist movement, and appealed to the ranks to carry on party activity. It decided to circulate to the ranks this appeal, document on "Main Features", resolution on criticism of Mao, in the hope of allaying the honest suspicions of the ranks about the PB and helping them to think on correct lines. It also started innerparty forum as a weapon of innerparty democracy.

Almost all the CCMs present here at that time (only two CCMs from Andhra and the CCM from Assam were due to arrive) opposed violently the circulation of the appeal, publication of the forum and certain formulations in the "Main Features" document. They argued that our acceptance of the formulations that we had committed trotskyite-titoite type of misakes would give a handle to the disruptors and cause unnecessary panic among the ranks. They objected to the circulation of the appeal and document "Main Features" unless their amendments, which amounted to minimising the seriousness of the mistakes of the PB and the harm done by left-sectarianism, were accepted. They said that the second issue of the forum should not be issued unless it is approved by them. Hence the PB had to drop the appeal and stop publication of the forum altogether. It circulated the document on "Main Features" and resolution on criticism of Mao to the ranks.

Rajeswara Rao too voted for the circulation of the

abovenamed documents while criticising some of the important formulations of the document on "Main Features". His reason for releasing them to the ranks was that though the documents suffered from many limitations they would be useful to undo some of the harm done by the PB's first statement on the editorial of the information bureau organ.

Apart from the shallow political understanding, the procedure followed by the PB in clearing its own sectarian understanding, in preparing drafts for the CC meeting and in conducting innerparty discussions was also wrong. Hence it was neither able to help itself, nor the CCMs, nor the ranks, to any appreciable extent. It always lagged behind the consciousness and the vigilance of the ranks and cadres. Because of that the few honest attempts it made of undoing the harm it had done met with failure.

Firstly it ought not have embarked upon a long and detailed statement on the editorial of the organ of the information bureau when its understanding could not but be faulty and inadequate. Later basing on that understanding it ought not have undertaken the drafting of documents without first fully settling accounts with the past sectarian line. Instead of that it should have come out with a short statement on the editorial, accepting it without reservation and stating that the editorial and the other international documents demanded a basic examination of the strategy and tactics pursued by the PB, which the PB would take up immediately with the help of the entire party. Then it should have attempted to draft a small document giving a clear understanding of the main formulations as such of the editorial of the information bureau organ with the help of the other international documents. Then on the basis of that document it should have attempted a selfcritical report of the PB reviewing the struggles and movements of the last two years in all their aspects. Then on that basis it should have attempted documents giving positive lead. This procedure would have helped itself and the CCMs and the ranks best. But this is what it exactly did not do.

### ***Responsibility of the CCMs***

All this does not mean that CCMs have no responsibility in landing the party in this mess. It is true the PB under the leadership of the general secretary had been guilty of not calling the CC meeting and of badgering individual CCMs into submission. But the CC is the highest party unit inside the party and the integrity, grit and self-sacrificing nature expected of a CCM should be of the highest order. It is with this confidence alone that they would steer the party through the white terror and fascist illegality to our goal that the party congress elected them to the CC. But the hopes of the party congress had been belied.

It is only the PBMs and CCMs from Andhra that put up a somewhat consistent fight against the sectarian line and titoist methods of the PB—specially that of the general secretary—though at times they also vacillated. A good number of CCMs tried to put up a weak fight against PB methods at first, but they collapsed at the first attack. Not only that. Some of them had gone to the extent of allowing themselves to be made the tools to pull the chestnuts out of the fire for the PB. They later supported the PB in its antiparty methods. A few, though they collapsed at the first attack, were honest enough not to actively support the PB in subduing the other party units or individuals unwillingly to accept the antiproletarian line and methods of the PB. But even then it is wrong to say they discharged their responsibility to stand up against the antiproletarian line and methods of the PB. But what we have to note is that they are a bit better than those who outright began to support PB's antiparty politics and methods after being badgered into submission.

There are a number of CCMs with whom left-sectarianism has become as much a "natural thing" as to some members of the PB; some of them even excelled the PB. They have been almost consistently supporting the PB's antiworkingclass politics and titoist methods.



It is true, after the editorial of the organ of the information bureau appeared, the CCMs generally have been struggling hard to understand the past mistakes and re-orientate themselves along correct path, like the members of the PB. But their subjective desire could not fully be translated into objective reality.

A section of them having been badgered by the PB surrendered to the left-sectarian politics and methods and themselves imbibed them. Hence they were unable to make a quick turn. But when things were explained to them properly they were able to see their mistakes and make a turn.

For another section of the CCMs, left-sectarianism had been as "natural" as with some of the PBMs. They practised it with a zeal. Some of them have acted as "shock-troopers" of the PB in badgering CCMs and PCMs. Completely immersed in the old rut and unable to come out of it, they refused to understand the horrible implications of the political line and organisational methods pursued by the PB, they refused to understand that these were completely anti-Marxist and antiparty. They refused to see the immense harm done to the party by the trotskyite left-sectarian line and titoist methods of the PB. Because of their being overwhelmed by the subjective feelings they objected to the very comparison of the left-sectarian analysis of the PB with that of the Chinese trotskyites in 1926 and also objected to the very mention of the term titoist methods in any document of the PB. They refused to make a turn till the very last, till the CC meeting.

The PB's wrong procedure cannot be put up as a serious argument for the CCMs not making a quick turn. As members of the highest unit of the party, their responsibility is not less than the PB. In spite of the PB they should have been able to make a turn in such critical situations on their own and discharge their responsibilities as members of the highest unit inside the party.

It is impossible to give even a short account of the role of each CCM during these two years and after the edito-

rial of the information bureau organ, in this short report. A short account of each CCM can be found in the minutes of the CC meeting, which are being circulated along with this report.

The party has to learn a big lesson out of this blackest page in the history of our party. This should be the last time where the CCMs failed to check the antiproletarian methods and line of the PB. They must stand up independently in spite of all odds for correct things fearlessly and boldly.

In this connection it is also necessary for every CCM to selfcritically examine why and how this surrender had taken place. It is generally true and correct to say that our Marxism-Leninism is so weak that it has not given us courage to take a bold stand and fight for the correct line. But it is not enough to say this and thus satisfy ourselves. Besides this general truth, there are cases of opportunist surrender and skin-saving attempts in toeing this openly left-sectarian line, despite the fact that they possess certain fundamental knowledge of Marxism-Leninism and that they see in practice the havoc the sectarian line is causing. Unless and until this kind of refusal to draw lessons from our practice with a view to test the correctness or otherwise of our policies is put an end to; unless the unbolshevik shirking of expressing their point of view is not discarded once and for all, and subjective, opportunist and careerist surrendering tendencies are not fought out and liquidated, the future of our party leadership as a whole and of individual comrade concerned will be dark and dismal. Besides improving, steeling and tempering in the theory of Marxism and Leninism all CCMs must consciously cultivate the habit of uncompromising innerparty struggle for the correct line and practice.

In this connection it is necessary and useful to quote a relevant passage from the "Report on the Fundamental Lessons of the Episode of the Traitor Kostov", delivered to the plenum of the central committee of the Bulgarian Communist Party by the secretary Vulko Chervenkov. In

the passage quoted below Chervenkov gives in a masterly way the qualities required of a member of the highest unit of the party, the CC. Here is what he says:

"Apart from the collective spirit, which must become an unbroken rule in the work of the polit bureau and the central committee, we must strengthen a deep adherence to principle admitting of no withdrawals or compromises. In the polit bureau and the central committee, comrades, we must strengthen a perfectly clear and pure bolshevik atmosphere. Only those party workers may remain and work in the central committee and the polit bureau, who are as pure as the waters of the Rila Lake, who are upright, who have no secrets kept from others and from the group; who say what they think, do not mince words like diplomats, do not flatter, do not forgive anyone when it is a case of bad work, who are exacting with regard to themselves and others; who do not suffer from liberalism, are not afraid to criticise most severely even their closest friend when the interests of work demand it; who do not grow giddy with past services, do not rest on their laurels; for whom the unity of our party and its strengthening is the highest good in life; who have no greater care than their care for the party, have no other interests apart from the interests of the party; who study, do not remain at the same stage in their learning, and not only do not abandon their studies and live on their old capital, but who go forward, continually raise their political and specialist qualifications; who develop as men with a profound knowledge of the work under their immediate direction; who look into the heart of matters, are never content with what has been achieved, do not suffer from garrulity, are intolerant of shortcomings, never forget that they are leaders and bear historic responsibility before the people and the country, that they are the servants of the party and of the people, mandated by them and accountable to them."

Apart from the CCMs the rest of the party committees and entire party ranks should also fearlessly and regular-

ly participate in the innerparty discussions and do their duty in shaping the political policy and tactics and decisions on important issues that face the party from time to time. This is the only and sure guarantee against any such Himalayan debacle in future.

### *Serious Situation Inside the Party and Mass Organisations*

The orders of the PB to go into reckless battles, with adventurist forms of struggle, the repeated 'bold calls' for general strikes etc. which hardly materialised, the signal failure not only to correctly lead the agrarian revolution in the countryside but advancing crude sectarian strategy and tactics which resulted in the defeat and disruption of the agrarian struggles and the utter contempt with which the cadres were treated and the way in which discipline minus correct political line was sought to be enforced—threw the party ranks into frustration and demoralisation. The party rank and file and the lower party committees faced with the hard realities of life, began to realise that the sectarian line pursued by the PB is completely wrong and they were disgusted with the antiparty methods of the PB and lost all faith and confidence in the central leadership of the party.

In the absence of any organisational reports from different provinces except Andhra for the last two and a half years, it is difficult to draw a concrete picture as to what devastating damage has been done to the party and mass organisations on an all-India scale. But from the stray oral reports as are gathered from the individual CCMs, we get a dismal picture—a picture of party organisation and different mass organisations being on the verge of liquidation.

Most of the provincial committees and their centres got thoroughly disorganised and some even went out of existence. Most of the cells and lower committees are not properly functioning. The other party committees have been carrying on lifeless functioning and unable to tackle the problems facing them—not knowing a way out—mutual

recrimination, throwing the blame upon each other, finally some committees reached the stage of factionalism and got disrupted. The whole of the innerparty life got poisoned. There is no frank expression of one's own views. The ranks and the party members, even CCMs, unable to participate in the free innerparty discussions, for fear of being dubbed as cowards, betrayers, saboteurs, petty-bourgeois funks and what not! A stinking "barracklike atmosphere" of suspicion, intrigue, tension, and "sealed lips" prevailed inside the party till the editorial of the organ of the information bureau. This is an ideal ground and fertile soil for the growth of disruptors, careerists and spies. This situation is much worse than before the second congress in the days of reformism. The innerlife of the party can best be described by an extract from *Son of the People*, the autobiography of Thorez, the French communist leader. The only difference is that there in France it was a local branch of the party which had worked havoc with the party through its left-sectarian craziness and the leadership of the Communist Party of France with such an experienced leader as Thorez at its head, while here the leadership of the CPI with exceptions of a tiny minority had gone completely left-sectarian and wrought havoc with the whole party. Hence our job is many times more hard and difficult now.

Thorez writes thus, in *Son of the People*, his autobiography:

"The Communist Party did its utmost to unite the working class and the impoverished sections of the middle class in action against the ruling class. Within the party itself there were certain elements who did not understand the tactics of 'class against class' which the change in the general situation had made necessary. Before long some of them were even going to desert us. As a reaction against this attitude, the leftwing extremists of the Paris region, deluding themselves as to the real strength of the party and its power of winning over the masses, embarked upon a wildly impracticable policy. Its only result was a succes-

sion of bureaucratic and mechanical decisions which neither could be, nor were, applied, of skeleton demonstrations brutally broken up by the police, of insistent demands to party members to call a strike as an example, of expulsions on the slightest pretext, of savage attacks against anybody suspected of reformism, and so on and so forth. As an inevitable result of this crazy policy the party tended to become a sect completely cut off from the masses and to complete the picture, some of the old party leaders, themselves directly responsible for this wild and futile policy, went over to the trotskyist camp, blaming the party and the Comintern for the mistakes they had made and the results of them.

"It was absolutely necessary to carry on the fight on both fronts: against opportunism on the one hand, and against leftism on the other. This was the job I had to undertake to the best of my ability."

"Further, the particular group which had managed to secure all the key position had completely forsaken the Leninist line... The membership of the party had fallen off. They interpreted the democratic centralism laid down by Lenin in terms of arbitrary decisions from above, passive obedience from all ranks, stifling of all free discussion, suspicion, timid acquiescence or else silence, sealed lips, no fruitful criticism and, in short a barrack-like atmosphere. The party sank to a caricature of itself, reduced to impotence and condemned to vegetate hopelessly instead of being, as it should be, the conscious spearhead of the working class."

The condition of different mass organisations—such as trade unions, kisan sabha, students' federation, etc.—is also on the verge of liquidation. They continued working as long as their full legal functioning was allowed by the class enemy. Sectarian policy and adventurist tactics thrust upon them, disrupted their unity, exposed them to the brutal attack from the ruthless enemy, made them helpless and vulnerable before such attacks. With total banning of them in many provinces and virtual illegalisation

of them in others, these mass organisations went out of existence for all practical purposes except in name. Non-realisation of the immense necessity of illegal organisation and functioning of the trade unions, kisan sabhas etc., and nonadoption of the method of skilful combination of legal with illegal methods of organisation and mode of work led to practical liquidation of them before the brutal onslaught of the enemy.

It is clear from the above that whereas in the former days our main form of conducting party and mass organisations was legal, the present conditions impose upon us the illegal party and mass organisations as the main form. Either one has to adapt to it or get liquidated.

*Remarkable Political Initiative of the Ranks Since the Editorial of the Organ of the Information Bureau*

The eyes of the party ranks and the committees were opened by the editorial of the organ of the information bureau, Peking manifesto and Liu Shao-chi's speech at the Peking conference, and the articles of the leaders of the CPSU(B) on India and other colonial countries. They have broadly found out the reason for this serious state of affairs inside the party. For the first time in the history of the party, the party ranks and cadres have begun to think very seriously about the political line and tactics the party has to follow in future. They are showing justified bitterness and anger against the top party leadership—mainly against the PB—for having led the party into such an abyss. For the first time they are showing unprecedented political initiative in the history of the party, which is a sign of hopeful future for our party. The best proof of this is the unequivocal condemnation by the entire ranks of the self-justificatory statement of the PB on the editorial of the organ of the information bureau. Some of the PCs and comrades had criticised and condemned the statement sharply and brought important fundamental points, which made the PB and CCMs to wake up and make serious

efforts to go deeper into the roots of the matter. The later documents of the PB were also criticised correctly by them, as not making a sharp turn and suffering from the left-sectarian understanding. The ranks and the cadres for the first time in the history of the party have been making a strong political criticism of the leadership and contributing their share in hammering out a new political line. It is true that at the time of the second party congress ranks and cadres had also shown some political initiative, which of course had been subsequently retarded and crippled by the PB. But the political initiative and the vigilance as are shown by the party ranks and party units of different levels during this period of innerparty struggle for a correct line have no parallel in the history of our party.

Though because of these innerparty discussions the foul "barrack-like atmosphere" is gradually getting shattered, still there is no room for complacency. Even before the party congress, the very vitals of the party were eaten away by the practice of right-reformism for a very long time and a moth-eaten frame was left of it. Left-sectarian elements took charge of it afterwards. Instead of repairing it and rebuilding the party into a strong bolshevik party, they began to smash the very frame itself. Not a single evil such as bourgeois-liberal methods of organisation, style of work etc. of the right-reformist period was smashed. On the other hand bourgeois authoritarian and titoist methods of organisation and style of work had been superimposed by left-sectarianism during the last two years. Hence the position has become extremely complicated. It has become very difficult to discern and demarcate right-reformist politics and methods with that of left-sectarianism. It is not impossible to find people practising right-reformism under cover of left-sectarian slogans (i.e. revolutionaries in words and reformists in action) and vice versa. While left-sectarian tendencies are still resisting correction, the right-reformist tendencies which lay have been raising their ugly head and openly carrying on the disruption. They are moving heaven and



earth to take the party back to reformism under the cover of fighting left-sectarianism, while paying lip-service to the line of the information bureau. In this atmosphere some careerists, opportunists and disgruntled elements also are trying to make use of the present confused situation inside the party and bag honest elements for carrying on their antiparty aims.

The colonial thesis on party organisation has very sharply pointed out that "anarchism is the opposite pole of bureaucracy". The organisational method pursued by the PB and permeated to all levels of party organisation is something more than mere bureaucracy—it is authoritarianism, pure and simple. As a result of prolonged suppression of innerparty democracy and arbitrary actions in dealing with individual members and party committees and due to sudden awakening of the ranks to the overwhelming state of affairs inside the party—a violent reaction leading to the other end is bound to be there. Already the signs of opposition to all centralisation, to all leadership, to all stringent discipline are visible inside the party. Both in Calcutta as well as in Bombay, important party units and party comrades have raised the slogan of "reorganisation of the party from below with rank-and-file initiative" threatening higher units with implementation of the above slogan bypassing the higher committees. Taking advantage of the prevailing confusion inside the party and angry mood of the party ranks against the policy and practice of the PB, the just and healthy urge of the party ranks for restoring the innerparty democracy—i.e. their right to participate in shaping the policy of the party and to set up a party leadership on the basis of election—is sought to be exploited by the opportunist and disruptive elements for their own end. Such instances are not many, but these are dangerous tendencies which, if allowed to grow, can only end in disrupting and liquidating the party.

The central committee has to wage a simultaneous battle both for rooting out the authoritarian titote methods of organisation of the old PB as well as the anarchic ten-

dencies that have begun to rear their head inside the party as a reaction to those methods and in the name of inner-party democracy.

Neither mere formal democracy nor mere waving the rod of discipline to enforce central authority can rid the party organisation of such dangerous poisons. The necessary preliminary conditions for fighting both the evils "are the development and maintenance of living associations and mutual relations within the party between the directing organs and members, as well as between the party and the masses of the proletariat outside the party"—the way out shown by the Communist International theses on party organisation.

The conditions, as now prevail inside the party, provide fertile soil for breeding spies and provocateurs and enemy agents. It is only through a constant vigilance on the part of all party units and each party member and also by sticking to the correct organisational principles in spite of all provocations that the real danger that threatens the party from this end can be successfully averted.

It is a long, hard and difficult job for the CC and PB to fulfil the task of cleansing the Augean stables created by both right-reformism and left-sectarianism, with the aid of the PCs and DCs and other committees and of the ever-vigilant political initiative of the ranks.

### *Main Organisational Tasks before the CC*

What are the main organisational tasks that emerge out of the situation as narrated above?

(1) The CC shall have to put an end to the "barrack-like" and "sealed-lip" atmosphere inside the party once for all. The CC shall have to forge effective methods to establish complete innerparty democracy and create conditions in which all party members can get the full opportunity to participate in the innerparty discussion for hammering out the new correct strategy and tactics of Indian people's democratic revolution for national liberation.

(2) As a condition for creating such an atmosphere all disciplinary actions taken against individuals and party units by the PB and also by different party committees under its guidance, shall have to be reviewed and reconsidered in the background of the wrong political line and organisational methods pursued by the PB and other lower units of the party. In reviewing, existing conditions of the individuals and party committees against which actions were taken shall also have to be taken into consideration.

(3) The CC has to take steps for reorganising the PCs, DCs, and other party committees, wherever such reorganisation is necessary, basing on the principle of proletarian democracy and strict centralisation;—i.e. in evolving the party leadership at different levels of party organisation, conscious association of the party ranks in selecting such leadership has to be ensured, keeping however in view the present illegal condition of the party and condition of white terror prevailing inside the country. Such reorganisation can take place on the basis of a full discussion of the new party line and on the basis of full criticism and selfcriticism of the activities of different comrades and party committees and of review of past activities and struggles, in the light of the new understanding of the party policy.

However to start work immediately, wherever the situation demands, the CC will appoint provisional committees for breaking the immediate deadlock in the party organisation, with those comrades who can command the general confidence of the ranks and who are capable of fulfilling the tasks facing the respective party unit in this critical juncture.

(4) Keeping in view the present illegal condition of the party and the condition of white terror let loose by the Nehru-Patel regime, the illegal party apparatus has to be thoroughly reorganised on a sound scientific basis, the method of combining the legal and illegal functioning of the party and mass organisations has to be mastered and measures have to be taken to ensure the full utilisation of the legal possibilities that still exist.

(5) The entire party leadership and the party ranks have to be educated in Marxism-Leninism and serious efforts have to be made to raise the theoretical level of the entire party. This equipping the party with the knowledge of Marxist-Leninist theory coupled with the free participation of all party members and party units in shaping the party policy can alone guarantee to keep the party on the correct rails and also enable the comrades to carry on their practical activities with initiative and bolshevik efficiency.

(6) The CC must make conscious and consistent efforts to root out all old antiparty bourgeois organisational ideas, methods, habits, and style of work—both right-reformist and left-sectarian. It must instal bolshevik organisational ideas, methods, habits and style of work, basing itself on the teaching of the Lenin and Stalin on the same and the organisational principles laid down in the "Theses on Organisation and Structure of the Communist Parties" adopted at the third congress of the Communist International in 1921, together with the "Statutes of the CI" and forge the CPI as an effective vanguard of working class for the successful leading of the armed struggle as the main form of the struggle and combining the armed struggle with other forms of struggles.

(7) The CC has to keep in view the warning of the organ of the information bureau about the nefarious attempts of the titoist spies and agents provocateurs in India and lead the continued vigilance of the ranks in keeping the party away from those vipers.

(8) The CC has to make serious efforts to clear the misunderstandings and bridge the gulf that has been created between international communist movement—above all the Communist Party of China, CPGB and its leader R. P. Dutt who has been helping our party in innumerable ways since its inception—by the bourgeois-chauvinist and sectarian blunders of the PB. The CC has to make unswerving efforts to reestablish the bona fides of the CPI with the international communist movement and forge healthy and

fraternal relations with the brother parties of the world—above all, CPSU(B), the CP of China and CPGB. The CC has to make conscious endeavour to trace closely and counteract the poison spread over a long period—overtly or covertly—by both left-sectarian and right-reformist trends inside the leadership against the brother parties and their leaders.

Hereafter the CC should make available to the ranks all the important documents, articles and other materials of the brother parties. All the important documents of the information bureau also to be made available to the ranks, to make them keep a vigilant eye against any antiproletarian tendencies that are likely to raise their head inside the party in future and help them to counteract the poison already spread.

(9) The CC must make conscious and consistent endeavour to discard the old practice of CC to be virtually the federation of provincial units and PB to be the co-ordinating committee of that federation. It must build itself up as a united political team and leadership of the entire party and mass movement, through collective functioning, gaining by imbibing the experience of the movement of all the provinces, improving the capacities of the CC as a whole and individually and collectively by increasing their knowledge of Marxism-Leninism and its correct application, and behaving in an ideal way in the matter of hard work, revolutionary honesty, integrity and selfsacrifice etc.

(10) The PB must improve its functioning as a subordinate body of the CC and work under the political guidance of the CC.

No person or persons, however big he or they might be, should be allowed to be placed above the CC or PB. No decision of importance to be allowed to be taken by one or a few individuals on their own without the sanction of the CC or PB. Every comrade must be made to subject himself to the iron discipline of the party in general and his unit in particular based on democratic centralism.

### *The Best Course out of this Critical Situation*

What is the proper course before the CC to get the party out of this morass and to have its organisational tasks implemented?

The serious political mistakes and the colossal organisational mess which the entire party has been subjected to demand the convening of a party congress for hammering out a correct line and also for evolving a new leadership to put this line into practice.

But the party in India is passing through the condition of complete illegality for all practical purposes. Today nobody can think of holding a party congress openly and legally when, under condition of white terror, even an ordinary trade union or kisan sabha executive meeting cannot be openly and legally held.

A party congress presupposes, and our party constitution enjoins, the election of delegates for the party congress with the participation of every party unit all over the country which means a series of party conferences in all the provinces—at different organisational levels. Those who are aware of the thoroughly disorganised and devastating condition of party organisation and its tech in different provinces, the unmistakable existence of enemy agents very close to its periphery who are making every effort to blow up the party and also the condition of white terror through which the country as a whole and some provinces in particular have been passing, would not advise to embark upon the adventure of holding a series of conferences on an all-country scale. There may be exceptional cases where holding of local, district or provincial conference would be an imperative necessity even taking the gravest possible risks but to prescribe it on an all-country scale is not to realise the dangerous reality of the situation at all.

To hold a party congress without properly elected delegate from all the provinces with the participation of the

entire party ranks is to play false with the very idea of a party congress which we have no right to do.

Moreover, in underground conditions, to hold a party congress worth its name, even with minimum delegates, is to run the gravest possible risk. We have yet neither a liberated area of our own, nor a safe and easily approachable country near our border where we can go and hold such a congress with safety.

Taking all these factors into consideration, an enlarged session or the plenum of the central committee with the participation of the representatives of the provincial committees emerges as the proper solution for giving final shape to the decisions of the CC in evolving a correct line and electing proper central leadership of the party.

But the CC, by all means, shall have to ensure the full discussion over the new line among the entire party ranks. Each party unit and every comrade should take initiative to contribute his best in evolving the correct line. This will unify the party as a solid rock on a correct party policy and ensure the success of the CC plenum. The party constitution adopted at the second party congress provides for a plenum of the central committee in place of a party congress under critical circumstances when it is impossible to call a party congress:

"Extraordinary congresses are called by the central committee on its own initiative or at the demand of party units having a representation of not less than one-third of the total party members represented at the last party congress. The extraordinary congress is to be considered as having full powers if it has delegates representing not less than half the membership of the party represented at the last regular party congress. Representation quotas at the congress and the method of election are decided by the central committee.

"Note: If it is impossible to call a congress of the party, the central committee will call an enlarged session or the plenum of the central committee with the participation of the representatives of the provincial committees."

Further provision is made for the reconstitution of the CC but on the condition that confirmation of the same is got at an all-India congress or conference.

"The central committee, under exceptional circumstances, is empowered to reconstitute itself and other committees and fractions and to frame new rules. This reconstitution should be confirmed as soon as possible in an all-India congress or an all-India party conference, called by the central committee."

If both the above provisions taken together, the position boils down to this:

(a) In such critical situations when the party has to hammer out a new strategy and tactics, a party congress or at least an extended plenum has to be held.

(b) Reconstitution of the CC can either be made at the party congress and extended plenum of CC or have to be subsequently ratified by any one of them.

Hence in these circumstances we can and have to hold the extended plenum of the CC as the best possible course.

We have to remember that the enemies of party won't sit quiet until we find methods of correcting the past mistakes and evolve a new line. They are already on the move with a view to deliver smashing blows while the party is in political confusion and wipe it out before it can hammer out a new line and reorientate itself on that basis. The imperialists and their agents, the Indian big business, unleashed a new wave of fascist terror unknown in the history of our country, not only against Telangana and Andhra districts of the Madras presidency but on all our strongholds throughout the country, such as Kerala, Tamilnadu, eastern UP, parts of Bihar, Assam, Manipur, Tripura, etc. The white terror and civil war let loose in Telangana and Madras presidency is no ordinary thing—shooting down our party members and sympathisers at sight, inhuman torture in specially-made torture chambers, shooting down comrades by bringing them out of subjails etc. Their plan is to wipe out our strongholds before the situation goes out of their control. The congress government is making seri-



ous efforts under the guidance of Anglo-American imperialists to square up its quarrels with the reactionary puppet government of Pakistan, not only to stem the tide of the revolution in the Indian subcontinent but also to help the imperialists to drown the revolutionary national-liberation movements of Southeast Asia. Another concrete purpose of these attempts at rapprochement is to sandwich the resistance areas like hill border regions of Mymensingh district, Manipur, Tripura, etc. on the borders of India and Pakistan.

The leadership of the Socialist Party of India, lackeys of big business, have let loose a barrage of lies and slander against the party. They are not only trying hard to isolate us from other progressive left groups, but also appealing to the congress government to realise that this policy of armed struggle in the rural side is more dangerous than the previous adventurist tactics of our party and to suppress us all the more vigorously and help them in their nefarious game.

The renegades thrown out of the party are making every effort under the leadership of Joshi to disrupt the party from inside and are waiting for their chance to split the party.

In such a serious situation, the party cannot sit and go on discussing the new line alone. It has to carry on a twofold task simultaneously if it is serious at all about the guidance given in the editorial of the information bureau organ and the Peking manifesto.

The party has firstly to get out of the old sectarian and reformist rut and hammer out a new clearcut strategy and tactics.

Secondly, to proceed steadily to put the party on the rails of armed struggle in the countryside and rebuild the unity of the working class and the movement in the cities on the basis of one new line and tactics.

To lose sight of either of the above and to forget that both are to be simultaneously fulfilled leads finally to liquidate the party and the revolutionary movement al-

together. With this aim in view, the CC has to find a way out of this critical situation facing the party.

In this situation, the only way out before the party is that the present CC has to act with responsibility, coolness of judgement and courage. The CC while on the one hand has to take the necessary and immediate steps to fulfil the abovestated twofold aim, at the same time, it has to evolve such methods as to enable the ranks to participate fully and contribute their maximum to the hammering out of a new clearcut strategy and tactics.

For this, the present CC has to do the following things:

(1) Chalk out broad lines of new strategy and tactics on the basis of the editorial of the information bureau organ and on the basis of Peking conference discussions etc.

(2) Reconstitute the present CC on the basis of the abovestated broad lines of the new strategy and tactics and the selfcritical evaluation of the PBMs and CCMs etc. There should be no bar to include party leaders from outside the present CC, to be included in the reconstituted CC.

(3) This reconstituted CC will elect a PB. The new CC and PB will prepare the final drafts, on the basis of the discussion and decisions of the outgoing CC and circulate them to the ranks for discussion. The reconstituted CC will conduct widespread and intense discussions.

Extended plenum of the reconstituted CC including the representatives of the PCs will have to conclude the discussions and take the political and organisational decisions in the course of six months.

Meanwhile the new CC has to put the party on the rails of the new line enunciated in the drafts that are put for discussion and decision.

(4) The new CC will arrange to get the opinion of the information bureau and the international comrades on the documents released for discussion and organisational decisions taken by the present CC.

***Dissolution of the PB***

Before taking up the question of its reconstitution, the CC has to dissolve the PB and remove B. T. Ranadive from the general secretaryship for the following reasons:

Ranadive has been the initiator, executor and dogged defender of the trotsky-tito type of left-sectarian political line. The polit bureau had fallen in line, conciliated and abetted him in carrying out his anti-Leninist, liquidationist line, which has resulted in the party and mass movement being brought to the point of total disruption. The manifestations of that line are:

(a) Repudiation of the Lenin-Stalin teachings on imperialism and colonial revolutions, which resulted in equating the present stage of Indian revolution to the socialist stage.

(b) Sabotage of the agrarian revolution and armed struggle and adventurist tactics in towns and villages which brought the mass movement to the verge of total disruption.

(c) Bringing in of the titoist organisational methods—which resulted in almost disrupting the party organisation, suppressing innerparty democracy and poisoning innerparty life.

(d) Anti-international attitude and violation of the very principles of fraternal relations with brother parties, which resulted in overt and covert slander of brother parties and their leaders, supreme complacency and lack of vigilance against spies etc.

(e) Rejection of all creative Marxism under the slogan "we recognise nobody except Marx-Engels-Lenin-Stalin" and finally distortion of all Marxism-Leninism to suit its own left-sectarian adventurist purposes.

The polit bureau as a whole was responsible for all the crimes stated above. But this does not mean either that every member of the polit bureau was responsible for all the crimes stated above or that every member was responsible in the same degree taking each crime singly. The dif-

ferrent members of the polit bureau were responsible for the above crims in varying degrees.

This has been already given in the earlier part of the document.

### *Reconstitution of the CC and the PB*

The CC, if it has to be a functioning body under the present conditions of white terror, has to be a considerably smaller body than elected at the time of the party congress, say 11 or 13. The number can be increased as the movement develops and requires a bigger CC by including new competent cadre thrown up by the movement.

The "Theses on the Organisation and Structure of the Communist Parties" of the CI give the guiding rule for the constitution of CC and PB thus:

"In order to study the general and political situation and gain a clear idea of the state of affairs in the party, it is necessary to have various localities represented on the central committee whenever decisions are to be passed affecting the life of the entire party. For the same reason, differences of opinion regarding tactics should not be suppressed by the central committee if they are of a serious nature. On the contrary, these opinions should get representation upon the central committee. But the smaller bureau (polit bureau) should be conducted along uniform lines, and in order to carry on a firm and sure policy, it must be able to rely upon its own authority as well as upon a considerable majority of the central committee."

This means:

(1) Political level and capacities of a member are the main criterion, the CC must collectively represent the experience of the entire movement.

(2) "Considerable majority" of the CC must consist of those who are firmly convinced of the new line and can carry it out effectively.

"Differences of opinion regarding tactics ... if they

are of a serious nature" as told above, should get represented on the CC.

(3) The PB must be a politically united team with no tactical differences accommodated inside it. It "should be conducted along uniform lines" as the theses of the Communist International say. Otherwise the united and regular functioning becomes impossible.

In the condition of innerparty situation and particularly in the CC, it is not possible to completely realise the directives given by the CI as regards the constituting of the CC and the PB. But we must bear in mind the directives and struggle hard to arrive at organisational decisions approximating to them.

What should be the criterion for the election of the members of CC?

(1) Unreservedly accept the new line of the party.

(2) Political and organisational capacities to get things done. In critical situation, no vacillations either opportunistic or political, but stand like a rock amidst storm (the political-organisational capacities of individual have to be judged in relation to his past activities).

(3) Even if one, on his own, is not able to give correct solutions to major problems, at least he must have an ear to learn from the party ranks and masses and pose organisational, political and mass problems before the CC and enrich the CC with experience.

(4) The CCMs who had been the propounders and fanatical executors of this sectarian line and adopted turkish-titoist methods of organisation, who have refused to even think about their sectarian line even after the editorial of the information bureau appeared, and who after months of discussion of the new line refused to orientate in spite of the sharp criticism of the ranks, must not, as far as possible, be entrusted with heavy responsibility of the CC and PB membership until they prove in practice that they are once again fit for being entrusted with such responsibility.

***Directive for the Functioning of the CC and PB***

The central committee must be developed into a "supreme collective leader" and "a monolithic hammer which strikes at one point" of the party, which will be able to collectively tackle big problems arising out of the movement and gain the confidence of the entire party. Here is what Chervenkov says about it in his report to the plenum of the CC of Bulgarian Communist Party.

"It follows from this that the harm ensuing from every infringement of the collective character of work in the party leadership, from every underestimation of the central committee as the supreme directing staff in the country must be fully and thoroughly acknowledged.

"It follows from this that the nonbolshevik methods indicated must be entirely and mercilessly sent to the devil, not a vestige of them must remain, and bolshevik methods of work must be established forever in the central committee, the collective character of work must be consolidated with all our might, the central committee must be advanced more and more as the supreme collective leader of the entire political, public, economic and cultural life of the country. No institute, no organisation, no personality in our country can or may stand above the central committee, above the polit bureau. No decision of importance to the country may be taken, no action of importance for our country and the workers may be undertaken without its agreement and confirmation. This must become an iron law for all."

(1) The aim of the CC functioning must be to develop a politically united, competent all-India leadership. The past practice of double-membership, except in specific cases, has to go. CCMs can be attached to PCs wherever necessary.

(2) CC to meet on all important political and organisational issues and take decisions. It must meet at least once in 4 months.

(3) The PB to be in continuous session and take collective decisions and is entrusted with the responsibility of carrying out the decisions and the work of the central committee between its sessions. The secretary has to act with initiative within these limits. Though the PB can and has to take initiative on major political and organisational issues also, they have to be got confirmed by the CC as soon as possible.

(4) The slipshod and chaotic methods of functioning has to be put an end to. Division of functions and the principle of individual responsibility have to be introduced if the jobs have to be properly done and done in time. These following functions of the CC have to be collectively discharged or divided between PBMs and CCMs. To discharge these functions, committees have to be organised whenever necessary: general pol-org guidance; guidance to different PCs; fronts—trade-union and student fraction committees, kisan and agricultural labour; committees for agit-prop, legal journals and illegal journals, publication of agit-prop literature; party education, legal theoretical journal, illegal party forum and publication of theoretical books; tech; finance and treasury; special; fraternal relations with brother parties; women and youth. No special department for grading and checking up cadre at present, but should be one of the tasks of the PB.

(5) The mass front fraction committees have to work under the close guidance of the CC. They must keep in touch with the mass movement not only through reports but direct contact with the important centres of that front. A circular on the functioning of the fractions to be prepared.

#### *Reorganisation of the Provincial Committees and District Committees and Tasks of the PCs.*

In view of the wholesale dissolution and reorganisation of PCs carried on by the PB to push through its own

trotskyite politics, and the consequent reorganisation of certain DCs by the PCs on the same lines, it is imperative on the part of the CC to reorganise the PCs and make arrangements for the reorganisation of the DCs and other committees with capable comrades who command the confidence of the ranks, if the tasks set before the CC are to be fulfilled.

Some comrades are raising the slogan that the present PCs, DCs and other party committees have to be thrown out wholesale and these have to be reconstituted with others outside the present committees, because these are trotskyite-titoite committees organised by the trotskyite-titoite PB.

This slogan is as disruptive, if not more, as the titoite methods of the PB. This means that the same methods as applied by the old PB have to be adopted towards the present committees. This has nothing in common with the party of the proletariat whose single aim is to bring the people's democratic revolution to success and lead the battle for building up socialism.

As matter of fact it is wrong to characterise PB as a trotskyite-titoite body, simply because it had adopted trotskyite-titoite political line and organisational methods. It is doubly wrong to characterise the PCs, DCs and other party committees as trotskyite-titoite bodies because either they were reorganised by the PB or they carried the directions of the PB. This is the formal logic of a bourgeois logician but not of a dialectical materialist. Whether those comrades who raise this slogan mean it or not, this is opening wide the gate of the party to those who have taken the path of renegacy after having been thrown out of the party and to stinking right-reformism. This is the same contempt for cadres which the left-sectarian PB has been guilty of. Cadres are not created in a day. They are created over a long period through not only their individual efforts but also the hard collective efforts of the party and they embody the collective experience of the party as a



whole. The party that treats the cadres shabbily like dirt, cannot be a revolutionary party.

It is true that hard-boiled incorrigibles both of the left-sectarian and right-reformist variety who have become fossilised and who are immune to any change, have to be kept out of responsible positions and if necessary thrown out of the party. But the method to be applied on the whole to the cadres in the party of the proletariat is the method of correction, especially in times of crisis like ours at present, unless the very honesty and bolshevik devotion to the cause of the comrades is in question. This is the method followed by the brother parties, even the CPSU(B) the leader of the world communist movement. You can find innumerable instances from the history of the CPSU(B) as well as histories of brother parties. The proposed wholesale removal of the present party committees is as much disruptive and harmful to our cause, as the wholesale reorganisation of the party committees the PB has been carrying on till now.

Here the comrades have to remember another important point. In the party the main political responsibility of a wrong political line lies with the highest committees of the party, i.e. the PB and the CC and it increasingly lessens as we go to the lower committees. Hence the party has to adopt a more liberal attitude towards the lower committees. The principles which are applied for the reconstitution of the CC have to be applied more and more liberally as we go down the ladder of our party organisation.

Keeping the above principles in view the PCs or POCs, DCs, and other party committees have to be reorganised from those who are at present in the committees and others outside, on the following lines:

(1) The POCs or PCs have to consist of 7 members and a secretariat of 3, or only a PC of 5 without a secretariat as occasion demands.

(2) The members accept the new line. Those who oppose the line either from left-sectarian or from right-reformist angles have to be kept out.

This does not mean that every syllable of the interpretation of the CC of the lead of the information bureau should be accepted. But the agrarian revolution and the guerilla armed struggle as the main form of struggle and the strategy given by the information bureau should be accepted.

(3) Those comrades who have political organisational capacities to get things done.

(4) Those comrades of the proletarian or peasant origin who have got an ear for the party ranks and the masses and who can at least pose problems before their committees, even though they may not be able to give solutions on their own because of lack of Marxist theoretical foundation.

(5) Those comrades who have practised titoist organisational methods in the extreme and have lost the confidence of the ranks completely have to be kept out of the committees.

(6) Those comrades who had opposed either the trotskyite politics or the titoist methods of the PB even feebly have to be given preference.

### *Plenums and Conferences*

The party in the present conditions of extreme illegality and delicate national and international situation, cannot embark upon a complete system of conferences and elections from bottom to top.

Hence plenums and conferences have to be organised wherever indispensable after fullest possible political discussions and perfect tech arrangements, consistent with the conditions of white terror and safety of the party. New committees have to be elected at those plenums or conferences after full political discussions and selfcriticism.

At other places committees can be reorganised from top at the meeting of important comrades basing on the general discussions on the new line.

***Some Directives to the PCs***

(1) The old organisation on the basis of government administrative divisions has to go. The party has to be reorganised entirely on a new basis suited to the present line. This is to be the form in which it has to be reorganised, i.e. PCs, regional committees where the party has spread to sufficiently wide areas, area committees, zonal committees etc. This does not mean that this has to be done with a pen-stroke overnight. The party has to be put on a new basis gradually as the movement develops along new lines. A separate circular has to be sent giving details about the new organisational form.

(2) The present apparatus of the PCs is too heavy both organisationally, technically and financially. There is no division of jobs and individual responsibility. The PCs' finances are in a chaos. They collect very little money. Most of them either are living on the sale of the property or subsidies of the CC. The state of CC finances is much more horrible.

This state of affairs cannot continue any longer, if the party is to come out of this mess and survive at all. The present apparatus of the PCs has to be dismantled and simplified, in consonance with the strength and resources of the party in different provinces, and not on either sale of properties or subsidies from the CC. The principle of division of jobs and individual responsibility has to be applied as far as possible.

(3) The provincial committees have to review cases of disciplinary action taken against committees and individuals in the last two years as need be considered, and take suitable measures in the light of the new political line.

(4) The PCs must be vigilant against spies and agents-provocateurs who are trying to utilise the present confused situation inside the party to spread scandals and rumours and disrupt the party from within. Special care has to be taken against the activities of titoite spies, about whom the information bureau has given an open warning. This

can effectively be done by making the entire ranks vigilant over the matter. However this should not be allowed to develop into a spy-scare.

(5) Innerparty discussions have to be organised on the widest possible scale, basing on the international documents and the documents of the CC. The PCs have to start forums in their respective national languages for conducting these innerparty discussions.

(6) The PCs have to prepare the political organisational reviews of the movement of the last 2 years with the past background in respective provinces, basing on the understanding given in the new line. This is absolutely necessary for getting a correct understanding of the past for the unification of the party. Unless the job is done in a thoroughgoing fashion, remnants of the past wrong understanding will persist and obstruct the path forward every time. This is also necessary for the CC to get a consolidated picture of the all-India movement and to prepare a consolidated report which will be the basis for evolving clear-cut tasks.

(7) While fulfilling the above tasks, the PCs and the POCs have to fulfil their day-to-day tasks of a provincial unit, must stand at the head of mass movements on every live issue, must unite them and develop armed struggle in the rural areas on the basis of agrarian revolution.

Comrades of the CC! Our Party is facing a most critical situation in its entire history. All the enemies of the party, Anglo-American imperialists, big-business lackeys, the reactionary leadership of the Socialist Party and renegades thrown out of the party are making every effort to spread demoralisation and confusion inside the party and the masses behind it, in order to smash it from both inside and outside. The reactionary Nehru-Patel government has launched another wave of fascist terror campaign on our strongholds to wipe them out altogether.

The party is not only facing a serious danger but also extremely favourable opportunities. The enemies' camp is torn by conflicts and is disrupting. The peoples are every-

where very much discontented and disillusioned about the Congress and its fascist rule. They are rising in their own way in defence of their interests and resisting the fascist onslaught. There is a general leftward swing among the rank and file of the left parties. The international situation is extremely favourable. If we make a quick turn, evolve a new line and put our shoulders collectively to the wheel, our party will again be able to make a turn, to utilise the extremely favourable situation offered before it and march forward steadily on the path of guerilla armed struggle basing on agrarian revolution for the success of the people's democratic revolution.

Comrades of the CC! We are the members of the highest unit of our party and the political leadership of the entire party. A great responsibility lies on our head. Let us keep only the interests of our party and the revolutionary movement at heart, and make a united effort to understand our past mistakes in the light of the editorial of the information bureau organ and other international documents, strengthened by the sharp criticisms from the ranks and cadres that have been pouring in since the editorial of the information bureau organ appeared. Let us act up to the trust the ranks are still reposing in us in spite of our past mistakes. Let us take momentous political and organisational decisions, which will be the basis for getting the party out of the morass. Otherwise history will not forgive us!

## V

# **Report on Left Deviation Inside the CPI**

### INTRODUCTION

That the Communist Party of India was sunk deep in right-reformism and suffered heavily from it for a number of years is common knowledge of every party member. Hardly did we make a turn from it and start locating it in all its hidden manifestations in order to root it out, when the monster of left-sectarianism has gripped the party in its talons—a monster no less dangerous than right-reformism.

It is full two years since the Communist Party of India held its second party congress at which a long political thesis had been adopted and a number of other important resolutions also had been passed. In these last two years a serious innerparty struggle has been and is being conducted not only to unify the party on the basis of the new political line adopted by the second party congress, but also to get at the completely correct and clear understanding as regards the stage, strategy and tactics of our struggle. This innerparty struggle is expressed in a number of documents drafted and submitted by different provincial committees, members of the central committee and the polit bureau. Out of them, the draft note submitted by the provincial committee secretariat of Andhra—incidentally, the secretariat is comprised of two members of the

Draft critique submitted by the members of the CC from Andhra and approved by the central committee in its May-June 1950 meeting, published in May 1950—*slightly abridged*.

polit bureau and four members of the central committee—that was discussed and drafted in the month of April 1948, hardly one month after the second party congress, and the subsequent criticism of the polit bureau on it which obtains in the form of three main documents—i.e. *Some Questions of Strategy and Tactics* (called the *Tactical Line* in the present document), *On the Agrarian Question* and *On People's Democracy*—are the key and basic ones in which a good many highly controversial issues are discussed and decided one way or another.

In the same period, a number of important articles by eminent Marxist writers both on India and on general theoretical and political questions have been published in the international communist press. Particularly significant for us are those by the Soviet and the Chinese leaders like Zhukov, Dyakov, Alexeyev, Schneerson, Ostrovitianov, Mao, Liu Shao-chi and others. The resolution of the information bureau of the nine parties' conference (IBNPC) on the Tito gang and the ideological, theoretical struggle that has been unleashed on Leninist-Stalinist lines throughout the world in the communist parties is another historic event of the period. The discussions and deliberations of the Peking Conference of the Trade Unions of Asia and Oceania and the editorial that appeared in the *Lasting Peace*, organ of IBNPC, dated 27 January 1950, are of special importance, because they have direct bearing on the problems facing India.

In the light of all these it is incumbent on us, the members and leaders of the Communist Party of India, to examine selfcritically the whole understanding, outlook and practice of the Communist Party of India and its leadership, so that prompt and proper lessons and tasks are deduced from it for the future work and progress of the revolutionary movement in India. In a nutshell, this is the purpose and scope of this document.

The second party congress and its resolutions as embodied in the political thesis are an important step in the life of the Indian Communist Party and a big political

event inside the country. It is a genuine attempt to rescue the party from the mire of reformism in which it had been sunk for a long time.

The thesis succeeded in bringing out sharply the following salient points:

(a) The post-second-world-war international situation and the new alignment of forces in which the people's camp is sharply brought out, though the correlation of forces in India is wrongly estimated.

(b) The postwar crisis, the severe effects on the working class and the other toiling millions of India, and the consequent anti-imperialist mass upsurge, the machinations of imperialism and the reactionary big bourgeoisie to counter that upsurge, are also prominently brought out.

(c) It has taken note broadly of the fact that the new ruling bloc of imperialism, feudalism and the bourgeoisie now represents the chief immediate enemy of the revolution, and hence the national-liberation struggle is to be conducted not only against imperialism and feudalism, as in the past, but also against the collaborationist bourgeoisie (though it failed to distinguish the middle bourgeoisie from the big bourgeoisie and lumped them together). A sharp break is made from the former reformist understanding of the Mountbatten award and "to parade this new status as national freedom or national advance" is severely attacked and exposed. "The Mountbatten award does not really signify a retreat of imperialism, but its cunning counteroffensive against the rising forces of the Indian people" (*Political Thesis*).

(d) Though the agrarian part of the thesis is weak and without enough elaboration nevertheless it has shown how the feudal and precapitalist relations on land have brought ruin and misery to the overwhelming millions of colonial masses, i.e. the peasantry; the slogan of abolition of landlordism and land to the tiller is brought to the forefront.

(e) A call to rally "all the classes for whom the success of the democratic revolution is vital" and who are interested in defeating this new counterrevolutionary bloc



of imperialism, feudalism and the collaborating bourgeoisie is brought out in striking relief in the thesis; it also gave a corresponding democratic programme.

(f) The conception of workingclass hegemony which was in a way watered down in the period of reformism has been reinstated in the thesis with due emphasis even though its understanding of the concept of hegemony is crude and mechanical.

But this is not all. There are some serious shortcomings and dangerous roots of left-sectarianism from which the thesis suffered. Before we analyse them, it is also necessary to comprehend the circumstances in which the new line had been discussed and adopted. The draft thesis had seen the light of day in December 1947, and that too only, in English. It took some weeks more to get it translated into different national languages and reach it to the ranks. Between the second party congress where the thesis was adopted and the time when the original draft was issued there was hardly a month's interval within which the ranks were called upon to discuss and contribute. That too without the selfcritical report of the central committee by which alone it could have been possible to pick up all the threads, understand the deviations, note the departures and participate actively in the discussion. Added to this one cannot ignore the fact that the theoretical level of the whole party ranks was poor since it was in an emasculated condition due to the systematic discouragement of study of the theory of Marxism-Leninism in the preceding long period of reformism.

It was under these limitations that the second party congress was held. Even the congress itself imposed further limitations of its own. It was composed of a huge delegation, as much as a thousand, out of which six to seven hundred attended. Further there was a wide disparity of levels in the delegation. The time before the congress was short—just seven days, within which a number of resolutions besides the thesis had to be pushed through while the selfcritical report of the central committee was

given three days after the commencement of the congress, and only just a few hours before the discussion of the thesis was taken up. By the time of the meeting of the congress, severe repression was unleashed on the three major provinces of the south, thereby preventing several leading cadres from attending the congress and keep the whole congress in an atmosphere of tension.

The abovementioned state of affairs naturally had their repercussions and reflections on the deliberations of the congress.

Consequently the thesis suffered from the following principal shortcomings:

(a) The new constellation of class forces on a world scale in the post-second-world-war period is defined as one in which the entire world bourgeoisie, ranged together with its reformist hangers-on and reactionary supporters, is attempting to stem the tide of revolution and oppose the working class, the people, socialist Soviet Union and eastern democracies and colonial people. At the same time the aspect of bourgeois collaboration inside India is talked of loosely and vaguely, and not in precise and specific terms. While discussing the economic basis of collaboration, it generally speaks of 'big business'. The following quotations from the *Political Thesis* bear testimony to this: "The accumulation has made the Indian bourgeoisie—big business—ambitious and to look in all directions for investment... Notwithstanding the growth of liquid capital and ambitions, Indian big business is hemmed in from all sides by its backwardness, colonial limitations and dependence on Britain—factors which the latter is fully exploiting". "The sum earned by India through exports is too little to finance the requirements of big business and it is thus brought to face the bitter truth that for its very existence it is dependent on America or Britain."

But at the same time, throughout the thesis, whenever it spoke of collaboration, it used the phrase "bourgeois collaboration" which is vague and which may mean either the big business or the entire bourgeoisie. This ambiguity

and consequent confusion on it is best demonstrated when further discussions arose on this specific topic, how some of the members of the polit bureau themselves, who were also members of the drafting committee of the political thesis, came forth with different interpretations of the phrase "bourgeois collaboration" at different times and argued that the middle bourgeoisie at certain stage of the revolution can either be neutralised or brought into the democratic front. For example, Mehta in his note on the draft resolution of the Andhra secretariat (which was accepted by many members of the polit bureau), makes the following formulation: "Undoubtedly the lower sections of the bourgeoisie in the urban and rural areas, middle-sized traders and a section of the rich farmers, we will be able to neutralise in the course of the struggle."

But, subsequently by the time the tactical line document was prepared, the left-sectarianism of the polit bureau asserted itself completely and it rigidly and unambiguously declared the entire bourgeoisie including the rich peasant to be in the camp of the enemy, thus closing all loopholes left in the thesis for any corrective effort in the right direction on this topic.

(b) As a corollary of the above the question of the stage and strategy also remains defined in vague and broad terms. A tendency is revealed even in the political thesis while discussing the stage and strategy to forget the specific nature and tasks of the revolutions in the colonial and semicolonial countries and equate them with those of the revolutions in the independent, capitalist, imperialist countries—brushing aside the distinction. Similarly another tendency is expressed as though the slogan of people's democracy is a slogan which dispenses with definite and different stages of development in the post-second-world-war period. It is sometimes argued as if the democratic and socialist stages get mixed up into a single stage.

Take the following quotation from the *Political Thesis*: "It means the people's democratic revolution has to be achieved for the completion of the task of the democratic

revolution and the simultaneous building up of socialism." This is subsequently interpreted as to mean that both the stages, i.e. democratic and socialist, are mixed and rolled up into one single stage.

(c) In its analysis of the economic changes which have taken place in India during the period of the second world war, and the consequences thereof, the thesis points out how the Indian big bourgeoisie has profited by the war; but from this fact the thesis draws wrong conclusions, conclusions tinted with the wrong understanding based on certain erroneous formulations of Varga and false theories of the Tito agent, Kardelj, such as "India has become a creditor country from a debtor country etc."—conclusions which have been subsequently trenchantly criticised by Soviet economists and which bear the germs of the discredited 'decolonisation' theory. The thesis is tainted with the germs of this wrong understanding because while pointing out how the Indian big bourgeoisie has profited by the war, it at the same time fails to point out the basic fact—to which the above is subordinate—of the onesided colonial character of the Indian industries and their dependence on imperialism and the compradore character of Indian big capital which was acting as the agent of Anglo-American monopoly capital in maintaining India as their colonial base. Not only this, it wrongly tends to emphasise the independent development of Indian big capital and its 'conflict' with imperialism, its solving these 'conflicts' 'at government level', its gaining some big concessions from imperialism by 'political bargaining', etc.—thus virtually equating the economic status of India with that of the Marshallised countries like France, etc. In its analysis of Indian economic crisis too, the thesis makes concessions to the same wrong understanding as if Indian economy is an independent capitalist economy.

(d) Similarly, while on the one hand making formulations such as "the poorer sections of the landlords are to be given a moderate allowance for a certain period or allowed to retain private land sufficient for their main-

tenance", on the other the slogan that the "khas lands of the rich peasants must be confiscated without compensation and distributed among toiling peasants" is shoved in in a haphazard manner.

(e) Besides these the thesis does not give any warning against the danger of left-sectarianism.

The polit bureau later developed all the left-sectarian roots contained in the thesis into a full system, nullifying its basically correct formulations.

Curiously enough, some delegates to the second party congress had remarked in the congress discussions that the political thesis is somewhat like *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, meaning that it is diffused, voluminous and not sharp, etc. Thereupon B. T. Ranadive replied in the following manner: if the central committee was capable of presenting it in a sharp, short resolution, it would have been a great central committee, etc., pleading the necessity and inevitability of such a lengthy thesis. But the subsequent doubts and discussions on the stage, strategy, etc. showed how the diffused, voluminous character had really concealed some serious shortcomings and sometimes in a way selfcontradictory formulations too.

In the further discussions it will be shown how these concealed shortcomings revealed themselves later.

Seizing upon these ambiguities in the political thesis, a section of the provincial leadership in Andhra, incidentally which had been in the past consistent upholder of reformist line of the old central committee, curiously enough began to argue that with the Mountbatten award the entire bourgeoisie had got political power, the stage of the revolution was nothing but the October stage, i.e. the socialist dictatorship of workers and poor peasants, and at the present stage the struggle was a struggle against the entire bourgeoisie including the rich peasant. The middle peasant was not to be considered an ally in the democratic front, but only to be neutralised. On further discussion and clarification others withdrew from this stand, but one member of the central committee persisted on the same lines.

It was impossible to carry conviction to him if we had argued confining ourselves strictly to the letter of the political thesis. It was under these circumstances that the rest of the Andhra provincial committee secretariat, incidentally which had been consistently voicing its opposition to the reformist line of the old central committee since 1944—of course with its own limitations—was called upon to fight this left-deviation. As a matter of fact this swing to left-deviation was not confined merely to a few individuals, but was raising its head as a trend inside the party, in one form or other and in one measure or other. Thereupon a note was drafted by the Andhra secretariat in which clarification and concretisation of the issues in discussion was attempted.

The *Draft Note of the Andhra Secretariat* made the following basic formulations:

(a) It is wrong to refuse to make basic distinction and differentiation between the revolutions in imperialist countries and the revolutions in colonial and semicolonial countries that suffer from the domination of imperialism. In support of this stand, besides other arguments, it was stated that Russia was an independent feudal-military state whereas India is not independent but only a semi-colony.

(b) "The present stage of revolution essentially though not exactly is similar to that of the present stage of Chinese revolution, the stage that opened since 1927 bourgeois offensive against communist and working class".

To bring out a parallel mechanically or try to borrow verbatim strategy adopted for the October stage of the Russian revolution is totally wrong, confusing and misleading.

In this stage of our revolution, our fight is not directed against the "entire capital including the rural rich, kulaks and the profiteers, but only against imperialism, feudalism and the native big collaborationist bourgeoisie".

(c) The middle bourgeoisie may however maintain neutrality or participate in the revolution.

(d) The middle peasant is not to be neutralised in this stage of revolution as some argue on the basis of the analogy of Russian October stage, but to be won over. It is our task to rally the middle peasant to the democratic front and solidly unite with him.

(e) "The offensive launched by the Nehru government against CPI is a part of the international offensive started by world imperialism. It is an offensive by which it ranges itself against all progressive and democratic forces of the world. To put it bluntly, this offensive is practically nothing but a cruel civil war let loose by the imperialist-bourgeois-feudal combine against the working class, peasants and other toiling masses. The stage has come wherein even day-to-day partial struggles have to be fought armed or semiarmed. Armed resistance has been forced on the agenda of the revolution by this offensive of the bourgeoisie. Either we resist inch by inch the civil war and offensive let loose against us by all means at the disposal of the people, or allow the bourgeoisie a free hand to crush the forces of revolution and end in the victory of counterrevolution.

"Keeping all this in view, in areas where we are a good proportion in the masses like certain parts of Andhra, Kerala, Bengal, etc. the time has come to think in terms of guerilla warfare (Chinese way) against the military onslaughts of the Nehru government, which is bent on mercilessly liquidating us. Unless with a clear perspective we plan out methods of resistance and if we leave it to spontaneity future history will charge us with gross betrayal of the revolution."

Thus the nature of the civil war and the imminent tasks of organising armed resistance to the brutal offensive of the collaborationist regime are sharply brought out.

(f) The course and the path and the form of the struggle is similar to that of the Chinese, i.e. creation of liberation armies, etc. This is as regards the perspective of our struggle.

The polit bureau came out in its three documents con-

cerning the issues at controversy with a vehement attack and complete condemnation of every point made in the *Andhra Draft Note*. The polit bureau instead of utilising the strong points brought out in the *Andhra* document seized upon some of its shortcomings and certain oversimplified explanations and formulations and denounced the entire document as containing 'crassest reformism', as 'alarming to the extreme', 'and as an attempt to revise the political thesis' adopted at the second congress. Not satisfied with the rejection of all the main formulations made in the *Andhra* document, it went full length and made fundamental departure not only from the political thesis but also from all accepted tenets of Marxism-Leninism. And it chose to thrust all these distortions and worst sectarian formulations on the entire party as the supposed authoritative interpretation of the political thesis. In this connection it must be said that the polit bureau by then had sunk so deep in left-deviation that the strong points in the *Andhra* document, instead of helping it to grapple with realities and making it put these thought-provoking points to sober discussion, only caused it to get 'alarmed to the extreme'.

The force of the style used, the vehemence with which the attacks were delivered, the polemical sallies that were attempted therein, the false pretences that were made to fight reformism, the repeated invocations of the names of the masters of Marxism—Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin—in order to screen its left-adventurist formulations were such that they made the party ranks reel before them and made them shudder. Therefore the ranks could hardly pick up courage to come forward with any criticism of the documents. With all the weight and prestige that the second congress gave the leadership as those in the forefront of the fight against reformism, with the entire party crippled theoretically as a result of the long reformist past, these documents could go down more or less unchallenged in the ranks. Even some of the members of the *Andhra* secretariat, who could not agree with these documents,



dared not frontally attack them in the prevailing atmosphere of all-out political offensive of the polit bureau on these lines. The secretary of the Andhra provincial committee, in his capacity as a member of the polit bureau, had written a letter to the polit bureau expressing differences on some of the basic formulations of the polit bureau documents though they were in the form of doubts, seeking clarification, etc.

This was written on the basis of a series of discussion conducted on these documents inside the Andhra secretariat and in the light of a number of articles that had by then appeared in the international communist press.

This solitary voice of disagreement had no effect on the polit bureau.

Thus the polit bureau which accuses the Andhra secretariat of having attempted to revise the thesis and departed from it, etc., in reality has itself not only revised and made basic departures from the political thesis, but also committed the sin of revising the Communist International documents and all accepted tenets of Marxism-Leninism.

Before we examine these in detail in the main body of the present document, let us analyse in brief the points made out in the polit bureau documents.

(a) The polit bureau's interpretation of the international situation and analysis of the class forces operating therein is subjective and machanical. The formulation of Zhdanov made at the inauguration of the nine parties' conference, that the world is divided into two camps, etc., has been reduced by the polit bureau practically to mean that in the post-second-world-war period only one contradiction remains, i.e. that between capital and labour and all other principal contradictions of the era of imperialism have receded into the background and are of no or little significance for the strategy and tactics of the proletarian struggle. It is in a way so simplified that the working class and the communist parties can afford to do away with bothering with the various stages of the revolution and the entire world is reduced to such a simple and vulgar divi-

sion into 'haves and have-nots'. In fact this is how the polit bureau built its entire strategy.

(b) From this erroneous understanding flowed the rest of the blunders.

The polit bureau attempted to fit in every aspect of the problem into this wrong framework. A pseudo-class-analysis was made devoid of all objective reality, and only based on its own wishful thinking.

The accepted Lenin-Stalin formula of distinction and differentiation between revolutions in colonial and semi-colonial countries and revolutions in independent, capitalist, imperialist countries was summarily set aside. Thus the national-liberation aspect of our struggle and the particular task that enjoins upon us are refused to be taken into consideration at all.

To suit its conclusions a pseudoleft theory was invented "that the bourgeoisie acting within the framework of the Mountbatten plan has been able to bargain hard and advance its own interests in relation to imperialism," etc. It made the Indian bourgeoisie the spearhead of counter-revolution, thereby screening from the people the imperialists, their domination and their conspiracies. By stating that the Indian bourgeoisie has advanced its position, it has returned objectively in essence to the discredited old reformist stand that Mountbatten award constituted a "national advance".

(c) *Stage and strategy*: It is already pointed out in the forgoing, while examining the shortcomings of the political thesis, how it is vague and confusing about the stage of our revolution. Even after the question was raised on this point, the polit bureau in its document *On People's Democracy* only made the confusion worse confounded. The polit bureau pretended to make an attempt to clarify the Leninist concept that the two revolutions, i.e. the democratic and socialist, are the two links in one chain; but all it did was to play with phrases like 'interlinking', 'interweaving', 'interlacing', 'intertwining', 'delayed democratic revolution ripening into socialist revolution', 'its

extreme nearness to socialist revolution', etc. and work itself up to the conclusion that 'it is mixed', thereby meaning that the present stage of revolution is a combination of both the stages of February and October of Russian revolution. This is what the document *On People's Democracy* says on the point: "It is this mixing, this combination that gives people's democratic revolution in our country. Is the present phase of Indian revolution comparable with the February and the October revolutions in Russia? It is neither. It is mixed."

Thus the supposed clarification once again returns to the bankrupt anti-Leninist formulation made in the pamphlet *Opening Report by B. T. Ranadive on the Draft Political Thesis* which reads thus: "It has been characterised in the document that the struggle for democratic revolution gets intertwined in the struggle for socialism and there can be no two stages of revolution. It is the same type as in Yugoslavia."

Thus the polit bureau had successfully muddled the idea of two links in one chain as to make it into practically 'one link and no chain'.

Naturally, with such a muddled, confused and erroneous outlook on the question of stage, it is impossible that the polit bureau can work out a correct strategy. Here again after the much repeated talk of 'concrete class analysis' the polit bureau brings in its outrageous interpretation of Zhdanov's analysis of the international situation and argues thus:

"Zhdanov in his report on the international situation at the Warsaw nine parties' conference, describes the people's democratic government as a bloc headed by the working class—a bloc of peasants, people, etc. i.e. one in which the bourgeoisie has no place" (*On People's Democracy*).

Having sufficiently distorted and oversimplified Zhdanov on the one hand, and in the name of fight against reformism on the other, the polit bureau fulminated against Mao and the Andhra secretariat, which had quoted Mao in the following words: "The petty bourgeoisie and middle-

bourgeoisie oppressed and injured by this class and its state power, although they too are bourgeoisie, may however participate in the new democratic revolution or maintain neutrality." The polit bureau thus summarily ruled out the possibility of any section of the bourgeoisie becoming an ally of the working class in the people's democratic front at any stage of the people's democratic revolution. It does not stop there; it goes further. It applies the same rod to the rich peasant and goes hammer and tongs at any suggestion of the antifeudal role of the rich peasants, "since they too are peasant bourgeoisie!" It makes a demagogic attack on the Andhra secretariat. To quote from the *Tactical Line*: "How can rich peasants, even in the feudal areas, really play an antifeudal role when the entire bourgeoisie wants to compromise and enters into alliance against the masses; when their leader the industrial bourgeoisie has signed a new alliance with feudalism and when consistently fighting against feudal elements creates danger for the rich peasants also at the hands of the masses? How can all this happen when the class antagonism between the exploiters and exploited had reached such higher proportions?"

Such was the bankrupt manner in which the strategy was worked out by them.

(d) *Agrarian Question*: The polit bureau document *On the Agrarian Question* attempted at a basic revision of the formulation made in the colonial theses of the sixth world congress of the Communist International (herein after referred to simply as the colonial theses of Communist International). Such revision was made by means of a summary statement that "this was two decades ago, before the great capitalist crisis—before the second world war and the economic developments preceding it—two decades before the full effects of the growth of Indian industry despite imperialist obstacles. growth of trade, commerce and towns which led to increased commodity production, production for the market in villages could be seen, etc".

The polit bureau attempted at 'new' and 'fundamental' analysis and 'fundamental reestimate of the class relations in the agrarian areas'.

The so-called 'fundamental reestimate' has resulted in nothing but a stupid assertion that the capitalist relations have become dominant though feudal relics in varied forms 'still exist'.

The polit bureau takes cudgels against the Andhra secretariat for distinguishing the rich peasant from the capitalist landlord. That to reject this distinction has a number of harmful consequences is patent to any who has studied the teachings of Lenin and Stalin on this issue.

The polit bureau asserts that the rich peasantry in our country is "able to get out of the shackles of the feudal landlords by the power of money, the power of the exchange relations over feudal relations", and "these well-to-do elements are able to escape the medieval yoke and carry on capitalist exploitation".

Sometimes the wish is father to the thought for our polit bureau. Contrary to the understanding of the Communist International about the objective position and interests of the Indian big bourgeoisie, the polit bureau foolishly puts its faith in the objective potentialities of the collaborationist bourgeois regime to "compel feudalism to reform to its own advantage", "curb feudalism to suit its own interests" and "emancipate the peasant bourgeoisie" from the clutches of feudalism. While on the one hand it nullifies the real antagonism between feudalism and the rich peasant, and gets extremely touchy when it is pointed out by the Andhra secretariat, on the other it makes a big point on the antagonism between landlords and the Indian big bourgeoisie, whose objective interests in fact are closely bound up together in many respects. In reality what a Marxist has to understand and stress in this connection is the counterrevolutionary alliance of those two sections and not exaggerate their conflicts as the polit bureau does. It is with such a wrong outlook that all the agrarian bills proposed by the Congress government in different pro-

vinces are interpreted by the polit bureau and subjective and sectarian conclusions are drawn from them.

Naturally from all the aforesaid comes the prize conclusion that the rich peasantry is not only in the enemy camp but "is one of the main enemies in the rural areas—in fact the spearhead of bourgeois-feudal reaction in rural areas".

Then coming to the question of the middle peasant and his role, it is to be noted that the polit bureau far from debunking sharply the stand taken by some comrades that the middle peasant is to be neutralised in the people's democratic revolution, only provided ample grist to their mill. No doubt the document states that "he (middle peasant) can be won over, there is an important place for him in the alliance, because he is a victim of both feudal and capitalist exploitation", etc. But often-repeated formulations that precede the above statement such as "there is no doubt that initially his vacillations will be very big; incited by the rich peasants he may be hostile", "his vacillations however are bound to be great", "the middle peasant vacillates most" and "his vacillations will be therefore of the most violent type" etc. overstress the aspect of vacillation without taking into consideration the stage of the revolution. Thus what it does is in effect indirectly to concede the viewpoint of those who advance the slogan of neutralisation of the middle peasant, on the plea that the present fight is a straight fight between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie.

Lastly, the document introduces afresh the slogan of nationalisation of land, citing the authority of the colonial theses of the Communist International. The polit bureau which makes bold to revise the fundamental analysis made in it, dogmatically clings to this slogan of nationalisation of land without least bothering itself to put the question why in the East European democracies and in China this slogan was substituted by some other intermediary slogans. Nor does it bother itself with the subsequent clarification by Marxist authorities on this issue. Besides introducing

this slogan, the polit bureau advances the queer logic that it will be a rallying and galvanising slogan in the ryotwari areas, whereas in reality these areas of the country prove too tough for this slogan to go down because the principle of private property is more deeprooted among the peasantry when compared with other parts of the country. To cap it all it runs into imaginary fancies that the peasant masses in India "have seen that under present property relations, they have been expropriated", meaning thereby that their consciousness has outgrown the instincts of private property.

(e) *Forms of struggle*: The polit bureau, while on the one hand it indulges in big talk about world capitalist crisis, upsurge and revolution, etc., on the other fails to assess properly what all this really means. The nature of the civil war that has been unleashed by the imperialist-bourgeois-feudal bloc against the people's forces, the ruthless counterrevolutionary forms of struggle adopted by it are neither understood nor proper revolutionary forms of struggle attempted to be advanced. The suggestions of the Andhra secretariat, based on the experience of Telangana, for a planned partisan warfare are poohpoohed and ridiculed. When the Andhra secretariat says the perspective and the course of the struggle is similar to that of the Chinese, or in other words the 'Chinese path' the polit bureau refuses to see anything new in the Chinese struggle, and learn from it. It doggedly pitches its tent on the set forms of struggle, i.e. a general strike and countrywide armed uprising, as though the enemy was to allow you to muster and nourish your revolutionary forces as in the days of old. A number of phrases that were hurled into the documents which sound highly revolutionary are in reality nothing but a mere cloak for the opportunist and revisionist theories it invented.

(f) Finally, the polit bureau as a consequences of all this faulty and un-Marxian understanding, landed itself in a scandalous attack on Mao, the leader of the Chinese Communist Party, which has been successfully leading

the mighty people's liberation war of China. It did this because the Andhra secretariat in its *Draft Note* on the clarification of the questions of stage and strategy of our revolution extensively quoted from Mao's pamphlet *New Democracy* and other reports in support of the contention.

This refusal of the polit bureau to learn from the Chinese experience and the outstanding Marxist leaders like Mao, and resorting to vile attacks on Mao, has a number of serious consequences. At a time when the world imperialist press itself was busy putting out slanderous propaganda that he would become an eastern Tito, etc., the sly suggestions of the polit bureau in its documents that his booklet *New Democracy* is not accepted by the Cominform bureau, that Mao's contributions on new democracy belong to the category of revisionist theories of Browder and Tito, and that some of his formulations are reactionary, which no communist party will accept, etc., have done immense damage to the cause of the international solidarity of the revolutionary forces. Not only the bourgeois press but other left and pseudoleft press in the country utilised this to discredit the Communist Party of India and its leadership in the eyes of the people, but the party ranks also were terribly confused and badly miseducated by this. It is no wonder some committees and individual party members began to talk lightly of Mao and Chinese communist literature. It hindered and obstructed the entire party ranks in India from correctly imbibing the invaluable lessons of the Chinese revolution.

This is how the polit bureau has made a precipitous fall from right-reformism to left-adventurism all along the line.

Let us take a bird's-eye view of the way in which the leadership swung from the extreme right to the extreme left.

In the pre-second-congress period the party leadership under P. C. Joshi had practised tailism all along the line. Now in the name of fighting reformism the polit bureau practised left-adventurism. If the right-liquidationism



which ignored the independent class role of the proletariat had shelved the question of proletarian hegemony, the present left-sectarianism in the name of proletarian hegemony and socialism has isolated the proletariat and its party from its fighting allies.

Right-reformism with its opportunist interpretation and understanding of the anti-imperialist united national front had sabotaged the agrarian revolution; left-sectarianism with its pseudoclass analysis coupled with extreme slogans sabotaged and disrupted the agrarian struggle and armed resistance in the countryside.

On the question of nationalities, in the right-reformist period, the party leadership had tailed behind communal bourgeois chauvinism which ended in the disruption of the democratic movement. The sectarian polit bureau now in the name of proletarian internationalism and working-class unity, advocated the Bukharinite formula that reduced the slogan of selfdetermination of nations to mere 'selfdetermination of toilers'. If in the period of reformism our policy ended in supporting Jinnah and his Pakistan slogan, the present sectarian denial of real right of selfdetermination has only strengthened the hands of reactionary Nehru-Patel government.

Joshian reformism under the slogan of "partial struggles must be fought as partial struggles" preached and practised crude economism; the sectarian polit bureau under the leadership of Ranadive issued the slogan that "every partial struggle is to be transformed into insurrectionary struggle" and landed in left-adventurism.

Right-reformism derided 'spontaneity' with all its contempt for the masses, always putting organisation and its weaknesses only to sabotage struggles; the left-sectarians began defying spontaneity and in the name of struggles they overlooked, ignored and brushed aside the dire necessity of any organisation. While one negates and liquidates the upsurge in the name of organisation, the other liquidates the organisation with the formula 'crisis, upsurge and revolution' rolled into one.

. During the reformist era, it was bureaucracy in the party and the mood of the leadership was: everything to teach and nothing to learn; the party leaders are to say and the ranks are to do. Bureaucracy and anarchy stood at opposite poles with formal democracy in operation. The sectarians starting with the pretension of fighting for democracy, ended in undiluted authoritarian titoist methods in the name of democratic centralism. Bureaucracy, formal democracy and anarchy of the right-reformist era is substituted by complete nullification of innerparty democracy and establishment of titoite-turkish authoritarianism inside the party.

The old right-reformism reduced the standards of party membership to the mass level, corroding its revolutionary cohesion and fighting capacities. Now, with erroneous left-adventurist policy in operation and failure to convince politically and unify the ranks, it resorts to the magic wand of 'discipline' and disrupts the party. The right-reformist Joshi under the slogan "Function the form efficiently" discouraged the proletarian cadre and promoted untempered petty-bourgeois intellectuals to man the highest positions. The left-sectarian polit bureau catching the correct slogan of "proletarianising the party" vulgarised it and began to drive away cadres on the ground of their 'nonproletarian' origin. In other words, then it was liquidation of the party from the right-reformist end. Now it is liquidation of the party from the left-adventurist end.

In those days, under Joshi's leadership, the polit bureau attacked the Andhra secretariat branding it as sectarian and left-nationalist, etc., when it pointed out the mistakes in the tactics and policy of the polit bureau on a number of questions. The polit bureau 'criticised' that there was not a 'single socialist intellectual or peasant bolshevik' in the entire Andhra party, and circulated this 'criticism' to all the provincial committees. Now, once again, under the leadership of Ranadive, the polit bureau attacks the Andhra secretariat as 'crassest reformists', etc., when once again, the latter pointed out the errors in the strategy

and tactics as laid down by the polit bureau, and circulates its 'criticism' not only throughout India but throughout the world.

Thus the right-opportunist Joshi pushed his reformism down the throat of the party in the name of fighting 'sectarianism and left-nationalism'. The sectarians under the leadership of Ranadive pushed their left-adventurism in the name of fighting right-reformism. In reality neither fought the other; indeed, one cannot fight one deviation with another deviation. Both in fact fought against the growth of the revolutionary movement and the party in India.

This is how matters stand in a nutshell.

Right on the heels of the polit bureau documents articles appeared in the *New Times* and from Tass agency written by eminent Marxist writers like Dyakov, Liu Shao-chi, Schneerson and others. Some of the formulations these articles contain basically differ from those made by the polit bureau. These were immediately brought to the notice of the polit bureau and clarification and serious consideration sought from the polit bureau by the secretary of the Andhra provincial committee, who is also a member of the polit bureau. The polit bureau did neither choose to think seriously nor reply. The tenacity and persistence with which the polit bureau stuck to its wrong position can best be understood by the following two instances:

(a) As early as July 1949 an article by Mao on the "Dictatorship of People's Democracy" was published in the organ of the Cominform bureau from which a good many threads for a correct understanding of our own problems could be picked up. No less a party than the CPSU (B) thought it fit to publish it in a pamphlet form. But the polit bureau chose neither to publish it in its organs nor put it to inner-CC discussion. The general secretary had taken the stand that he was opposed to publishing anything coming from Mao uncritically in our press. This he had clearly stated in his letter to another member of the polit bureau more or less in the same period.

(b) The second glaring instance is as regards the inaugural address of Liu Shao-chi to the Peking conference of the trade unions of Asia and Oceania. Once again the polit bureau had neither thought it fit to publish it nor initiate inner-CC discussion on it. Not only that. It also appears from a reported conversation of a polit bureau member with a delegate from Hyderabad to the Calcutta peace conference that an attempt was made to press all the points Liu Shao-chi has made in his speech into the framework of the polit bureau's erroneous and sectarian formulations.

This attitude of refusal of selfcriticism persisted right up to the moment of the appearance of the editorial in the organ of the Cominform bureau (27 January 1950) which directly addressed itself to the strategy and perspective of the Indian revolution, which speaks against the stand of the polit bureau on every basic issue in discussion. After a couple of weeks of its receipt, the general secretary rushes to the press with a statement greeting the editorial. But this too lacks the necessary selfcritical approach and satisfies itself by making a mechanical paraphrasing of the editorial.

The statement of the polit bureau\* assumes to be an attempt on the part of the polit bureau selfcritically to examine its mistakes and achievements, etc. A few quotations from the said document are more than enough to demonstrate how the statement in question is rather self-deception than selfcriticism.

All that the organ of the Cominform bureau pointed out in its editorial, in the opinion of our polit bureau, is only a 'timely reminder' of the 'lag' in the actual achievements of the Communist Party of India, and not a sharp pull-up and totally alternative strategy and tactics placed before us!

The general secretary's report on the strategy and tactics "has correctly applied on many points the line of the

\* See this volume, second item in 1950.

political thesis"! This document which made formulations and advanced strategy which fundamentally revised Marxism-Leninism on almost all basic issues is acclaimed a correct contribution! This document which has topsyturvied the whole of Marxism, which is an embodiment of left-deviationist blunders, is acclaimed a document that "correctly applied on many points the line of the political thesis"! Could there be a more atrocious claim than this?

The agrarian document which made pseudoclass analysis and revised the entire Marxist-Leninist understanding on the colonial agrarian question is supposed to have "laid the correct stress" on and "rightly pointed out" a number of issues!

As a climax to all this exhibition of supreme selfconfidence—really speaking it is nothing but conceit—comes its claim that its policy of left-deviation in operation has "played a great role in unifying the ranks", etc. Is it not elementary Marxism that real revolutionary unity on Marxism-Leninism cannot be achieved with a left-adventurist policy in operation? Yet the polit bureau is giddy with its supposed successes and woefully fails to assess the damage caused.

Will it not be naive on the part of anybody to expect any genuine selfcriticism from the propounders of the left-adventurist policy in the party, who have miserably failed to make use of the invaluable international documents that appeared in this period, who arrogate to themselves all knowledge of Marxism and think they have little to learn from the brother parties and who doggedly defended their wrong line all through masquerading it as 100 per cent Marxism?

It is evident how the polit bureau's leadership has steadily marched straight from right-reformism into left-adventurism. With this left-adventurist policy in operation, with persistent refusal to correct itself in the light of both the experience and the international documents, it is not difficult to assess the damage caused to the liberation struggle of India. Of course it is imperative and urgent to

examine selfcritically the entire work on all fronts of the party during the last two years, without which no genuine turn can be made.

While world imperialism on the one hand is making hectic preparations to turn India into a bastion of reaction in the east and a jumping off ground to unleash a war on the people's liberation movements and democracies and the Soviet Union, it is highly deplorable that the leadership of the Communist Party of India on the other paralyzes the progress of the revolution and disrupts it with all the discredited anti-Marxist-Leninist pseudoleft theories and practices. The central committee, nay the entire ranks of the party, have to take serious note of these developments and do the needful immediately to set right the malady, rise to the occasion and lead the liberation war in the footsteps of the victorious Soviet people and the Chinese people.

We have seen above in this short introductory note in a general way the nature of the blunders the polit bureau has committed. It would be far incomplete if we do not proceed to detailed discussion and examination of each and every point raised herein.

Here we wish to clarify one point. Reference to the Andhra secretariat and its *Draft Note* is made throughout the present document, because the polit bureau's documents in question are a rejoinder to the *Draft Note* and hence such repeated reference becomes inevitable.

## I. ROOTS OF LEFT-SECTARIANISM

The purpose of the present document, as already indicated in the introduction, is to study selfcritically the serious left-deviationist mistakes in our party today. Because of their grave nature, it is necessary to go to the root of the errors and study in detail so that we rectify them easier and quicker.

It is no use satisfying oneself, as our polit bureau does, by saying that here is a small error and there a little gap—an attitude that blurs the bolshevik outlook on selfcriticism, which ought to be merciless. Here is the method and manner of selfcriticism given by Lenin:

"The attitude of a political party towards its own mistakes is one of the most important and surest ways of judging how earnest the party is, and how it, *in practice*, fulfils its obligations towards the *class* and the *toiling masses*. Frankly admitting a mistake, ascertaining the reasons for it, analysing the conditions which led to it and thoroughly discussing the means of correcting it—that is the earmark of a serious party; that is the way it should perform its duties, that is the way it should educate and train the *class* and then the *masses*. By failing to fulfil this duty, by failing to give the utmost attention, care and consideration to the study of their mistakes, the 'lefts' in Germany (and in Holland) have proved that they are not a *party of the class* but a circle, not a *party of the masses* but a group of intellectuals and of a few workers, who imitate the worst features of intellectualism" ("*Left-Wing Communism*").

Further, Lenin had occasion to observe "How true it is that a little mistake can always be turned into a monstrous one if it is persisted in, if profound reasons are given for it, and if it is driven to its 'logical conclusion'."

If even little mistakes, once persisted in, will turn into monstrous ones, one can easily imagine how our mistakes, which are not little but monstrous ones, already persisted in too long, and still only halfheartedly and formally accepted, will be damaging to the extreme!

It is in keeping with these instructive passages from Lenin that we shall proceed to selfcritically discuss our mistakes, etc.

The startingpoint for a number of deviations on the part of the polit bureau is its mechanical, subjective and sectarian interpretation of Zhdanov's report to the nine parties' conference at Warsaw. The polit bureau documents find

fault with the Andhra secretariat for its alleged reformist understanding of the international situation in the post-second-world-war period. While doing so, it seeks support of Zhdanov's analysis of the world situation from his historic report at the nine parties' conference, in which he stated "the more the war recedes into the past, the more distinct become two major trends in postwar international policy corresponding to division of political forces operating in the international arena into two major camps—the imperialist and antidemocratic camp on the one hand and the anti-imperialist and democratic camp on the other."

Let us see from the following how the polit bureau deduces the meaning of the two camps.

The political thesis says: "The old combination in which certain sections of the bourgeoisie and their reformist hangers-on were found in the people's camp in the common battle against fascism is replaced by one in which the entire world bourgeoisie ranged together, with its reformist hangers-on and reactionary supporters, is attempting to blend itself together to stem the tide of revolution and oppose the working class, the people, the socialist Soviet Union, the eastern democracies and the colonial peoples."

Though the formulation that it "is attempting to blend itself together" leaves room for doubt and different interpretations, the polit bureau, while subsequently amplifying this in its document, the *Tactical Line*, without leaving any room for any doubt, categorically stated that in the presentday world no section of the bourgeoisie—whether big, medium, small or peasant, in no country—whether imperialist, independent, capitalist, medium-developed capitalist, colonial or semicolonial, at no stage of the revolution—whether national-liberationist, democratic or socialist, can have a place in the revolutionary front. This in essence is its interpretation of the formulation of Zhdanov, the 'two major trends' and the 'two major camps'.

Is this Marxian interpretation or gross distortion? It is definitely the latter. Zhdanov's analysis is perfectly correct and clear, and anybody who will not and cannot see



the truth of this analysis cannot claim to be a serious Marxist.

After the October revolution the world is split into two fundamentally hostile camps, i.e. the camp comprising the Soviet Union, the world workingclass movement and the colonial-liberation movements and opposing it is the camp of world imperialism and its reactionary servitors. Again, during the course of history, particularly during the second world war, there was a temporary alignment of world forces which get divided into two different camps, i.e. the camp of antifascism under the hegemony of the Soviet Union, in which certain imperialist states also were compelled to be present for the time being. This antifascist camp after the defeat of the fascist camp again got divided into two major trends and two major camps as Zhdanov has stated. One is at a loss to understand how this pointing of two major trends and two major camps by Zhdanov can be interpreted in the way the polit bureau has done.

Does this mean exclusion of all the other principal contradictions of the era of imperialism—on the basis of which the strategy and tactics are worked out and that out of them only one contradiction, i.e. the contradiction between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie, capital and labour, remains, as our polit bureau sometimes overtly and sometimes covertly asserts? Does it mean that all other principal contradictions of the era of imperialism—except the one between capital and labour—the contradictions to talk about which the polit bureau is touchy and likes to call them 'differences', etc.—are of no significance for the strategy and tactics of the world proletariat in its struggle for power? Precisely this is what the polit bureau means.

Leaving aside all the rigmarole and the lot of revolutionary phrasemongering phrases such as "the major contradictions between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat" "when all the sections are united in organising a world front of capital against labour", "when all are united in spite of differences", "the main basic contradictions be-

tween the working class and the bourgeoisie", "the crisis and collaboration intensifying the contradiction between the people and the bourgeoisie hundredfold", "not reliance on the revolutionary contradiction ... between workers and the bourgeoisie", "how can all this happen when the class antagonism between the exploiters and the exploited had reached such higher proportions" etc., which only sway the gullible and mislead the ignorant, what is the main drive given and conclusion drawn from all the above discourse?

It is simple and plain: In the present phase of the world situation the proletariat has to build its strategy and tactics basing only on one contradiction, i.e. the one between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie; all the other principal contradictions of the era of imperialism are receding and will recede more and more into the background in the face of advancing tide of revolution, which is supposed to intensify the contradiction between capital and labour a hundred times, mitigating the rest of the contradictions. Hence it follows from this that as far as the present stage and strategy of our struggle is concerned right from the Anglo-American imperialists down to the rich peasant, all are united in a 'solid' counterrevolutionary camp. The polit bureau sees from the mighty growth of world revolutionary forces the growing unity of the world bourgeoisie—imperialist, big, medium, colonial, including the rich peasantry—into a counterrevolutionary bloc, but not the intensification of all the interimperialist contradictions and of the contradiction between imperialism and the colonial world, which are of no small significance to the camp of world socialism and democracy.

Here is an extract from a letter, introducing the polit bureau documents (*The Tactical Line. On the Agrarian Question, On People's Democracy*) written to the Andhra secretariat by a member of the polit bureau, with the approval of the polit bureau. It speaks eloquently of the understanding the polit bureau has on the formulations of Zhdanov:

"The crisis of capitalism and the basic contradiction of the capitalist society, i.e. the contradiction between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, has so much intensified, the camp of socialism and democracy has so much strengthened and the camp of imperialism so weakened, as a result of the second world war, that the bourgeoisie in every country on a world scale cannot now, when the doom of entire capitalist system is within sight, take the conflict among them to the point of certain sections joining the camp of the people for a time as happened in the second world war, but on the other hand, on national and international scale it is uniting itself to avert its impending doom while taking every precaution to keep the conflicts among them within the limits of negotiation and compromise" (C. Rajeswara Rao's letter, December 1948).

This understanding and comprehension of the political bureau on present-day world contradictions has nothing to do with Marxism-Leninism, it is nothing but a base attempt to revise the entire thesis on imperialism by Lenin.

Stalin, in his *Foundations of Leninism* at the very outset, analysing the "Historical Roots of Leninism", states thus:

"Lenin called imperialism 'moribund capitalism'. Why? Because imperialism carries the contradictions of capitalism to their last bounds, to the extreme limit, beyond which revolution begins. Of these contradictions there are three which must be regarded as the most important.

"The first contradiction is the contradiction between labour and capital...

"The second contradiction is the contradiction among the various financial and imperialist powers in their struggle for sources of raw material, for foreign territory...

"The third contradiction is the contradiction between the handful of ruling 'civilised' nations and hundreds of millions of colonial and dependent peoples of the world...

"Such in general are the principal contradictions of imperialism which have converted the old 'flourishing' capitalism into 'moribund' capitalism."

Thus it is evident that the three contradictions as described by Stalin are the 'principal' ones and 'most important' ones. It is sheer nonsense to speak of only one as 'revolutionary' and the others as having no bearing on revolution, and the one important and the others unimportant.

Again is it a fact that the intensification of the contradiction between labour and capital reduces the other contradictions to insignificance?

Here is what the Communist International and Stalin say regarding such vulgarisation:

"The world coalition of capital is unstable, internally corroded, but armed to the teeth, is confronted by a single world coalition of labour. Thus, as a result of the first round of imperialist wars, a new fundamental antagonism has arisen of world historical scope and significance; the antagonism between the USSR and the capitalist world...

"Thus the system of world imperialism, and with it the partial stabilisation of capitalism, is being corroded from various causes: First the antagonism and conflicts between the imperialist states, second, the rising for the struggle of the vast masses in the colonial countries, third, the action of the revolutionary proletariat in the imperialist home countries and lastly, the leadership exercised over the whole revolutionary movement by the proletarian dictatorship in the USSR. The international revolution is developing" (*Programme of the Communist International*).

Stalin, while dealing with the topic of "The October Revolution as the Beginning of and the Groundwork for the World Revolution" in his book *Problems of Leninism* states thus: "If we add to this the fact that not only defeated countries and colonies are being exploited by the victorious countries, but that some of the victorious countries have fallen into the orbit of financial exploitation at the hands of the most powerful of the victorious countries, America and England; that the contradictions among all these countries are an extremely important factor in the disintegration of world imperialism; that, in addition to these contradictions, very profound contradictions exist

and are developing within each of these countries; that all these contradictions are becoming more profound and more acute because of the existence, alongside of these countries, of the great Republic of Soviets—if all this is taken into consideration, then the picture of the international situation will become more or less complete”.

We can best understand the importance of all these contradictions to the cause of the world proletariat if we recall the stern admonition Stalin gives to one of the comrades who had underestimated the importance of these contradictions. This is what Stalin says:

“I have just been handed a note in which a reply to Chicherin’s article is requested. Comrades, I consider that these articles of Chicherin which I have read carefully are nothing but literature. They contain four errors or misconceptions. Firstly, Chicherin is inclined to deny the existence of contradictions between the imperialist states, to exaggerate the international unanimity of the imperialists and to overlook and underrate the internal contradictions between imperialist groups and states (France, America, Great Britain, Japan, etc.), contradictions which do exist and give rise to war. He has exaggerated the factor of unanimity of the imperialist rulers and has minimised the force of the contradictions that exist within this trust. Yet these contradictions do exist, and it is on them that the activities of the people’s commissariat of foreign affairs are based... The whole purpose of the existence of the people’s commissariat of foreign affairs is to take account of these contradictions, to use them as a basis and to manoeuvre within these contradictions” (“Report on the Immediate Tasks of the Party in Connection with the National Problem”).

When we find that our polit bureau has committed the same mistake, i.e. of overrating the unanimity of the entire world bourgeoisie and underrating the significance of its contradictions and conflicts, and this in the name of Zhdanov, the enormity of the crime of the polit bureau stands out in bold relief.

Here one word of caution is necessary. In the foregoing, we have attempted to expose the bankruptcy and anti-Leninist character of the polit bureau understanding which reduced to nought all other contradictions except the one between capital and labour. But this criticism of ours should not be taken to mean that all contradictions therefore are of equal significance and there is no such thing as the main contradiction and subsidiary contradictions. Such an understanding also would run counter to Lenin-Stalin teaching on imperialism and dialectical materialism.

To be clear, in the present historical period the contradiction between the capitalist world and the world of socialism continues to be the main and the deepest contradiction: this contradiction today is expressed sharply by the fact that the two great imperialist powers America and Britain are openly calling for a war by preparing for it, against the Soviet Union and people's democracies of both east and west.

The antagonism or contradiction in the capitalist camp is undoubtedly of subordinate importance compared with the fundamental world antagonism, i.e. the contradiction between the world of socialism and the world of capitalism. To forget this fact is to lead oneself into right-opportunist deviation.

While it is so, it should be noted that in the presentday world, "of various contradictions existing in the capitalist camp, the contradiction between American capitalism and the British capitalism has become the main contradiction".

Although this antagonism in the capitalist camp is of subsidiary importance compared with the fundamental contradiction between the world of socialism and the world of capitalism, the proletariat cannot afford to maintain neutral attitude towards this struggle in the capitalist camp. The proletariat will, and must, utilise these contradictions. But it determines its concrete approach basing on the magnitude, intensity and nature of these contradictions as they evolve and undergo change in that process.

The above gives the guide for a correct concrete understanding based on dialectical materialism. It enables us to see sharper the bankruptcy of the polit bureau understanding—that the accentuation of the main contradiction, that between capital and labour, between socialism and imperialism, mitigates and reduces to nought all the other contradictions.

So that no room may be left to doubt that precisely this is the understanding of the polit bureau on the international situation and that of the 'two camps', and that this is the startingpoint of a number of mistakes it has committed the following can be cited.

In its *Draft Note* the Andhra secretariat had made the following two formulations with reference to the international situation after the second world war:

"(a) Imperialism after the two world wars has been so weakened as we find it today that the nature of its warring camps has been ended. Today, there is only the mighty colossal American imperialism" etc.

"(b) American imperialism faced with unheard of crisis is bent upon not only keeping colonies and semi-colonies under its domination but steadily advancing step by step to reduce other independent and capitalist states as its colonies. This parasitic feature of rapidly devouring the weaker sections of its own species has a tremendous bearing on the course of the presentday world," etc.

Before we go to examine these formulations, it must be stated that the fact the Andhra secretariat deals with the topic of international situation in a small para goes to show that the intention and purpose of the secretariat was not to sit for a detailed examination of the international situation, but only in passing to point out the mighty growth of American imperialism after the second world war and consequent intensification of the contradictions and conflicts in the world bourgeois camp. However briefly it may have been dealt, it makes formulations which are never-

theless serious in their nature and deserve careful attention and examination.

Especially the first formulation that "the feature of its warring camps had ended", practically approximates to the formulations of Varga, which are subjected to scathing criticism and condemnation by the CPSU(B) in the following words:

"Comrade Varga considers that there is very little probability of an armed conflict in the future between the imperialist countries. Certainly, we cannot foretell the concrete forms which the contradictions in the imperialist camp will take in the more or less immediate future. But it would be a gross error to underestimate the importance of these contradictions and their inevitable sharpening in connection with the striving of American enslavement of the countries of Western Europe.

"We must for this reason, decisively reject the attempt which Comrade Varga makes to revise the fundamental thesis of the Leninist-Stalinist theory of imperialism as to the inevitability of wars between the imperialist powers arising from the sharpening of the unequal economic and political development of capitalism in the period of imperialism and the general crisis of capitalism" (*Communist*, July 1949).

The polit bureau which subjects the *Draft Note of the Andhra Secretariat* to microscopic examination and attacks almost every basic formulation it has made and the points it has raised—of course often the correct ones too—has curiously enough not a word to say against this gross reformist formulation. That it has kept silent on this and acquiesced in it is not accidental.

The polit bureau, instead of attacking this dangerous reformist formulation of the Andhra secretariat, concentrates its fire on the other correct part of the secretariat's formulation in which it is stated that American imperialism's striving for world markets and world domination "has a tremendous bearing on the course of the present-day world", etc.



This idea of intensification of intercapitalist or inter-imperialist contradictions is subjected to ridicule, calling it "supposed to have tremendous bearing", a "shame-faced theory of class collaboration", "reliance on and basic reliance at that on the increased competition among the bourgeoisie", and as an "attempt to tie the proletariat to the apron-strings of the bourgeoisie", etc.

In this connection it must be said that the accusing statement of the polit bureau that the Andhra secretariat is taking up the position of "exclusion of the contradictions between the people and imperialism, between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie" and "reliance on and basic reliance at that on the intercapitalist contradictions", etc., is completely incorrect and devoid of facts and only an oversimplification in its polemical zeal to put the opposition in the wrong and score a point for its line of argument.

The polit bureau as a matter of fact is so touchy at the very mention of innercapitalist contradictions or antagonisms, to characterise them as contradictions, that it only uses the term 'differences', etc., which do not fully reveal the seriousness of the steadily intensifying conflicts and their objective basis. In the very next sentence it chooses to nullify even the significance of this term 'difference' by shoving in another phrase that "whatever differences that might exist among different sections of the bourgeoisie, etc."

Thus it refused to base itself on the analysis and thesis of imperialism by Lenin. Nay, it works out the above quoted erroneous formulations of Varga to its logical end and is guilty of revising the basic tenets of Lenin's *Imperialism*.

Our selfcritical examination and discussion on this aspect will be however incomplete without quoting in full the relevant passages from Lenin's *Imperialism*. Then only everyone of us will be able to understand how the revision has taken place and how to combat it. This revision is in the nature of, and owes its origin to, the discredited theory

of 'ultraimperialism' by Kautsky—though Kautsky made it to draw different conclusions of his own.

To quote Lenin:

"International cartels show to what point capitalist monopolies have developed and they reveal the object of the struggle between the various capitalist groups. This last circumstance is the most important; it alone shows us the historico-economic significance of events; for the forms of struggle may and do constantly change in accordance with varying, relatively particular and temporary causes, but the essence of the struggle, its class content cannot change while classes exist. It is easy to understand, for example, that it is in the interests of the German bourgeoisie, whose theoretical arguments have now been adopted by Kautsky (we will deal with this later) to obscure the content of the present economic struggle (the division of the world) and to emphasise this or that form of struggle... In order to understand what takes place, it is necessary to know what questions are settled by this change of forces. The question as to whether these changes are 'purely' economic or noneconomic (e.g. military) is a secondary one, which does not in the least affect the fundamental view on the latest epoch of capitalism. To substitute for the question of content of the struggle and agreements between capitalist combines the question of the form of these struggles and agreements (today peaceful, tomorrow warlike, the next day warlike again) is to sing to the role of sophists."

"We ask, is it 'conceivable' assuming that the capitalist system remains intact—and this is precisely the assumption that Kautsky does make—that such alliances would be more than temporary, that they would eliminate friction, conflicts and struggles in all and every possible form?"

"Therefore in the realities of the capitalist system, and not in the banal philistine fantasies of English parsons, or of the German 'Marxist', Kautsky, 'interimperialist' or 'ultraimperialist' alliances, no matter what form they may assume, whether of one imperialist coalition against an-

other, or of a general alliance embracing all the imperialist powers, are inevitably nothing more than a 'truce' in periods between war. Peaceful alliances prepare the ground for wars, and in their turn grow out of wars; the one is the condition for the other, giving rise to alternate forms of peaceful and nonpeaceful struggle out of one and the same basis of imperialist connections and the relations between world economies and world politics."

This is how one has to understand the contradictions of the era of imperialism and not in the way the polit bureau does.

The secretary of the Andhra provincial committee, after a round of discussion of the polit bureau documents in the Andhra secretariat, and on the appearance of some articles in the international Marxist press, addressed a letter to the polit bureau bringing this error to its notice. Here are the relevant passages from the letter:

"While I was with you it was only the Chinese documents which were making distinction between big business and small bourgeois sections. But, after I came here, a number of articles were published in the organ of the information bureau of nine parties... *American Political Affairs*, the *New Times*, even our central organ, which go to show that it is not only the Chinese party but several other parties also are making such a distinction. This also confused all of us, including myself. Though all the secretariat comrades are not of the same opinion with regard to the question whether it is permissible to make such distinction among bourgeois class in India, they agree on one point. That is, the interpretation we have given to Zhdanov's report on this point is not in common with that of communist parties of several other countries and Cominform.

"...I only mean this that the interpretation which we have given to Zhdanov on this point that in no country in the world can any section of the bourgeoisie be neutralised or won over is not accepted by several other communist parties."

It must be made very clear that we do not uphold all the points raised in this letter as correct ones in their entirety. Nonetheless the salient point in discussion here has been brought to the notice of the polit bureau as early as May 1947 (in fact it was written on 28 February 1949).

The polit bureau had neither considered it worth discussing all these months, nor even as late as February 1950, when it sat to discuss selfcritically its entire political line after the appearance of the editorial article in the organ of the Cominform bureau, was this taken note of.

One does not find even a single word of reference to this colossal blunder, to this crime of revisionism in the polit bureau's statement on the editorial wherein it says it "attempts to place mistakes of the polit bureau..." before the ranks. It is exactly on this aspect that Lenin warns that "the attitude of a political party towards its own mistakes is one of the most important and surest ways of judging how earnest the party is and how it in practice fulfils its obligations towards its class and the toiling masses". Is the polit bureau's attitude in this respect in line with this? Undoubtedly not.

Does not the claim of the polit bureau to have read and understood Zhdanov's report become false when once it chooses to poohpoo and nullify the significance of the striving of American imperialism for the monopoly of world markets and the consequent intensification of the inner-imperialist and innercapitalist contradictions? What does Zhdanov's report drive at? In fact, it is a clarion call to mobilise all the antifascist anti-imperialist democratic forces the world over to resist the aggressive designs of American imperialism. See the few following quotations from Zhdanov's report:

"Thus the new policy of the United States is designed to consolidate its monopoly position and reduce its capitalist partners to a state of subordination and dependence on America."

"With an eye to the impending economic crisis, the United States is in a hurry to find new monopoly spheres of

capital investment and markets for its goods. American economic 'assistance' pursues the broad aim of bringing Europe into bondage of American capital. The more drastic the economic situation of a country is, the harsher are the terms which the American monopolists endeavour to dictate to it.

"But economic control logically leads to political subjugation to American imperialism."

Zhdanov while drawing attention to the fact that American imperialism is more and more assuming the role of fascist aggressor observes thus:

"The frankly expansionist programme of the United States is therefore highly reminiscent of the reckless programme, which failed so ignominiously, of the fascist aggressors, who as we know also made a bid for world supremacy.

"Just as the hitlerites, when they were making their preparations for political aggression, adopted the camouflage of anticommunism in order to make it possible to oppress and enslave all peoples, and primarily and chiefly their own people, America's present ruling circles mask their expansionist policy, and even their offensive against the vital interests of the weaker imperialist rival, Great Britain, by fictitious considerations of defence against communism."

What conclusions has been drawn from all this? Not that innercapitalist and innerimperialist contradictions dwindle into insignificance in the post-second-world-war period, but their intensification. To quote:

"It should be noted that the American variant of the western bloc is bound to encounter serious resistance even in countries already so dependent on the United States as Britain and France. The prospect of the restoration of German imperialism, as an effective force capable of opposing democracy and communism in Europe, cannot be very alluring either to Britain or France. Here we have one of the major contradictions within the Anglo-American-French bloc."

This needs no further elaboration.

Further, look at the special task Zhdanov formulates for the communist parties of Great Britain, France and Italy, etc.

"A special task devolves on fraternal communist parties of France, Italy, Great Britain and other countries. They must take up the standard in defence of the national independence and sovereignty of their countries. If the communist parties firmly stick to their position, if they do not allow themselves to be intimidated and blackmailed, if they act as courageous sentinels of enduring peace and popular democracy, of the national sovereignty, liberty and independence of their countries, if, in their struggle against the attempts to economically and politically enthrall their countries, they are able to take the lead of all the forces prepared to uphold national independence no plans for the enthrallment of Europe can possibly succeed."

Such are the tasks for countries like Great Britain and France that highlight the significance of the American expansionism. But the polit bureau ridicules this as "supposed to have a tremendous bearing on the course of the presentday world", when the *Draft Note of the Andhra Secretariat* makes the following formulation:

"The crisis of world imperialism can be best seen when we observe the present Truman's American expansionism. American imperialism faced with the unheard of crisis is bent upon not only keeping colonies and semicolonies under its domination but steadily advancing step by step to reduce other independent capitalist states as its colonies. The parasitic feature of rapidly devouring the weaker sections of its own species has a tremendous bearing on the course of the presentday world. Monopoly capitalism today has been so naked an enemy not only of socialist democracy but also of 'bourgeois democracy'. It is out not only to destroy the toiling and working masses, but also devour a section of its own class, the small bourgeoisie. Thus in the presentday international background, we find

imperialism in its last stages caught in the grip of a crisis so deep, so extensive and unheard of."

The aggressive designs of American imperialism are of such an alarming nature as to endanger the independence and national sovereignty of countries such as Britain and France too, which by themselves are imperialist states. Then is it not patent that it applies with greater force to India—essentially a colony—and the task of national liberation becomes all the more significant for our revolutionary struggle? It is unquestionably so. It is this already existing grip of British imperialism on India and the increasing penetration of American capital that signify the essentially colonial status of India. Precisely because of this position a possibility of a broad anti-imperialist united front comprising of workers, all peasantry and even the middle bourgeoisie exists. But the polit bureau refuses to see this truth and, mark you, it does this in the name of Zhdanov.

## II. "THEORY" OF COLLABORATIONIST BOURGEOISIE ADVANCING VIS-A-VIS IMPERIALISM USING MOUNTBATTEN AWARD

We have seen so far how the polit bureau hopelessly bungled on the analysis of the international situation, how it thoroughly distorted the formulations of Zhdanov and nullified the significance of the world contradictions, simplifying them to a single contradiction of the world bourgeoisie versus the proletariat.

Now in this chapter we will proceed to discuss how the polit bureau revises the understanding of the Mountbatten award as given in the political thesis and plunges headlong into the position of clean ignoring and bypassing the national-liberation aspect of our struggle: how the logic of the polit bureau does not end here and goes further to summarily reject the accepted Leninist-Stalinist principle of fundamental distinction between the colonial and semi-colonial countries on the one hand and the independent, capitalist, imperialist countries on the other.

The political thesis adopted by the second party congress analyses the Mountbatten award\* and the consequent tasks.

Every aspect of the analysis is absolutely correct, except the use of the ambiguous term 'bourgeoisie' with regard to collaboration, which may mean either big bourgeoisie or the entire bourgeoisie, as the polit bureau subsequently chose to interpret.

Has the polit bureau stuck to this basic analysis? That it evidently did not can be proved from quotations from the *Tactical Line*\* and other polit bureau documents.

The polit bureau at one stroke turned upside down the whole analysis of the Mountbatten award as made out in the thesis. Whereas in the political thesis the award is characterised as "not really signifying the retreat of imperialism but its cunning counteroffensive," in the tactical line the collaborationist "bourgeoisie, acting within the framework of the Mountbatten plan, has been able to bargain and advance its own interests" vis-a-vis imperialism.

While in the political thesis the collaborationist bourgeoisie is described as the 'junior partner', which has shared power, in the imperialist-feudal-bourgeois combine, in the tactical line it has become the most fighting active partner and leading force in the combine.

Thus it is the polit bureau which revised the political thesis and not the Andhra secretariat as is alleged by the polit bureau. It is the polit bureau with its discovery of the discredited theory (that the collaborationist bourgeoisie has advanced its position bargaining within the framework of the Mountbatten plan) "that has taken the party back to the 'Mountbatten resolution' (which characterised the Mountbatten award as national advance) and repudiated the line adopted by the second congress", and not the Andhra secretariat as the polit bureau alleges.

Finally, it shifted its position from the earlier formulation where we have to conduct fight "not only in opposi-

\* See this volume, pp 39-41.



tion to imperialism but in opposition to the bourgeoisie also" to the new position of fight "not only in opposition to the bourgeoisie but in opposition to imperialism also". The former roles of imperialism and the collaborationist bourgeoisie as indicated in the thesis, are reversed in the tactical line.

Further, imperialism is said to have forgotten one point, i.e. the people, and hoped to keep the princes as its reserves. This discovery of 'forgetfulness' of imperialists is simply amusing to any student of Marxism. Are the British imperialists, who are the most experienced and cunning lot among the world imperialists, so naive as to forget this and dream of keeping the princes as their 'independent reserves' for long as against the collaborationist bourgeoisie? It is sheer common sense that once the Indian collaborationist bourgeoisie is given a share in the state power and is allowed to handle the state machine, with huge armies at its disposal, it is simply unimaginable for the princely hirelings to think that they can survive without the direct assistance and support of, and without collaborating with the new India government. Imperialism is neither so naive as to forget this patent fact nor, for the matter of that, has it forgotten it at all. The conspiracy of the imperialists which culminated in the Mountbatten award had been, besides weakening the Indian liberation movement by partitioning India, to leave as many thorns as possible in the side of the new India government, so that it is further weakened to such an extent as to extract total surrender to imperialist dictators. Such thorns have been the numerous 'princely states' that are left formally independent throughout India.

Let us take the most typical of them, i.e. Kashmir and Hyderabad. In both these cases imperialists successfully utilised and are utilising the weakness of the Indian collaborators to compel them to abject surrender on every major issue—national and international. It is this surrender which is to be observed on the issue of the sterling balances; the alignment on the various questions in the

UNO and open subservience to the imperialists, acquiescence in the Atlantic pact, the issue of the atom bomb; the tying down of India to the war-chariot of the British commonwealth, of sending Gurkhas to Malay, on the question of the South African Indians, and the political economic military collaboration with imperialists against Southeast Asian colonial liberation struggles; dropping of the question of nationalisation of industries, of giving constitutional guarantees for protection of foreign capital in the country, etc.

Instead of observing all this surrender of the Indian collaborationist government, of position after position to the imperialists, the polit bureau sees in all this only 'bargaining hard' and 'advancing its interests' vis-a-vis imperialism! Instead of seeing the steadily tightening grip of the tentacles of the British imperialist octopus, and of the American imperialists in addition, the polit bureau sees only that "the bourgeoisie has not only improved its position in relation to feudal elements but also in relation to imperialism"!

It is not difficult to see what political conclusions can be drawn from such analysis and formulations. It is to counteract that strategy suggested by those who argue on the basis that '15th August independence' has not changed basically the colonial position of India, etc., and to advance a strategy under the assumption that India is practically 'decolonised' after 15 August 1947.

After delivering a long lecture and advancing all types of ingenious arguments and having relegated successfully imperialism and its enslaving role into the background, the polit bureau comes forth with two propositions in the section "Dependence and Slavery to Imperialism."

First of all we would like to ask the polit bureau—do these two causes they have advanced, viz seeking imperialist protection for fear of people's revolution and dependence on imperialism for capital goods, really reveal the present real status of India or hide it? Is it not in a way arguing to equate the satellite nature of India with that

of any independent capitalist country like France, etc., which is also dependent on American Marshall 'aid'? Is it not exactly basing on this pseudo and sham analysis that the polit bureau subsequently landed in refusing to make any differentiation between the revolution in colonial and semicolonial countries and independent, capitalist, imperialist countries?

The following quotations reveal how the analysis made by the polit bureau conceals the full and real face of imperialism in India.

Lenin says in his "Preliminary Draft Theses on the National and Colonial Questions" for the second congress of the Communist International:

"Sixth, that it is necessary constantly to explain and expose among the broadest masses of the toilers of all countries, and particularly of the backward countries, the deception systematically practised by the imperialist powers in creating under the guise of politically independent states, states which are wholly dependent upon them economically, financially and militarily; under modern international conditions there is no salvation for dependent and weak nations except in a union of soviet republics".

The polit bureau chose not to explain and expose constantly among the broadest masses the deception of the imperialist powers, as enjoined by Lenin, but the reverse of it. It was only busy 'discovering' points to show collaborationist bourgeoisie could make 'advances' and make imperialism 'retreat'.

It is based on the above rich analysis of Lenin that Soviet writers like Zhukov, Alexeyev and others analysed the "15th August independence" of India conferred on us by British labour-imperialists.

Instead of making an objective analysis of the situation—at least by making use of these documents, instead of pointing out the continued basically colonial nature of India and driving home this point as it ought to, the polit bureau only finds that India has become a 'national state'; a 'satellite state'! Instead of seeing the crying and basic

causes that continue to keep India in the grip of imperialism, the polit bureau only sees two other causes—the collaborationist bourgeoisie's fear of the rising popular revolution and its need for capital goods—causes that only scratch the surface of the problem, causes that fail to present the full, complete picture; worse, causes that taken by themselves in reality only hide and screen the concrete factor of British imperialism, the leading counterrevolutionary force in the combine, in the forefront, naturally relegates the anti-imperialist aspect of our struggle to a general plane—a worldwide plane—with high-sounding phrases like 'not from this or that imperialism only', etc.

Thus the anti-British imperialist aspect of our struggle is brushed aside as of no special significance to the present stage of our struggle. Thus the national-liberationist aspect of our struggle is clean ignored criminally. Thus the polit bureau succeeded in essence in equating colonial and semicolonial India with any independent, capitalist, imperialist country in the world today (e.g. France, etc.), which for fear of class revolution in their countries and for financial help depend upon American imperialism and become its satellites. Thus the polit bureau, in its polemical zeal to combat the supposed deviation that 'nothing has changed', landed itself in the position that 'everything has changed', but for the general tie-up of the Indian reactionary government to world imperialism—a position of Indian collaborationist bourgeoisie 'advancing its interests' by 'hard bargaining' with imperialism within the 'framework of Mountbatten plan', a position that is tantamount to the discredited 'decolonisation' thesis.

It is no surprise that once the polit bureau got bogged in this position it obliterated the differentiation between the revolutions in colonial and semicolonial countries and in independent, capitalist, imperialist countries—differentiation which is an accepted Marxist dictum.

In this connection it is necessary to show how the Andhra secretariat, in its note, had brought forth this point before the polit bureau and how the polit bureau had

rejected it. Let us quote from the *Draft Note of the Andhra Secretariat*:

"Secondly, Russia was an independent feudal military state with peculiar features of industrial growth... Compared with what is described above India in its real sense is not independent and essentially it remains a colony, though after 15 August, with bourgeois collaboration, it can be defined as a semicolony. In a word, Russia was more near to advanced capitalist countries, whereas presentday India is a rotten colonial base."

"The bourgeois-democratic revolution is, in the main, yet to be completed. Our country is not an independent capitalist state but only a semicolony. Hence our revolution is in the main an agrarian revolution; not the agrarian revolution of the old type under bourgeois leadership, but agrarian revolution of a new type under proletarian leadership. Hence correctly classified as new democratic revolution."

"The national and international background for October revolution is totally and radically different from that of our present revolution. Hence the drawing of parallel or attempts at borrowing of strategy verbatim are wrong, misleading and disruptive."

"Thus, we see a completely different national and international set-up is present today when compared with October revolution, warranting us a completely reorientated approach in defining the present stage and strategy of our revolution. It is a wonder how comrades can gloss over the difference between the independent bourgeois state and semicolonial state. Is it not surprising not to find any difference between a 'new class' taking hold of state power after the February revolution and a new class sharing power with imperialism, smashing nothing but got everything of the old machine intact? Is it not fantastic to argue that the slogan of democratic revolution advanced in our political thesis is nothing different from the slogan of socialist dictatorship of proletariat and poor peasantry on

the eve of the October revolution? So the comparison of the present stage of our revolution with the stage of October revolution is not only wrong but misleading in very many respects. This deviation must be at once corrected or else we fail to effectively advance towards democratic revolution."

We must remember here that the secretariat had to advance the above arguments against those comrades who sought to nullify the difference between the present stage of our revolution and the October revolution, by talking loosely that the Nehru government is a Kerensky government, etc.

To be clear, it must be stated that we do not uphold one and all the above arguments of the Andhra secretariat as entirely correct. The main point, however, is the stress on the differentiation of the revolution in an independent country and in a colonial country, which is sufficiently made.

The polit bureau, instead of utilising the strong point made therein, seizes upon some somewhat wrong arguments and some incorrect ones too, and attacks the entire thing conveniently bypasses the crucial point.

The polit bureau has in the *Tactical Line* said enough to nullify the differentiation between India and tsarist Russia, to equate what is a colonial country with an independent imperialist country. By bringing in the 'clever' phrase 'experience of Russian revolution', the polit bureau neither can escape its guilt of equating the status of the two, i.e. the presentday India and tsarist Russia, nor can it succeed in its totally unwarranted suggestion that the Andhra secretariat is against imbibing the 'experience of Russian revolution'. As a matter of fact, the issue of the controversy has been whether it is permissible to ignore the differentiation between the revolution in colonial and semicolonial countries on the one hand and in independent and imperialist countries on the other, and whether it is correct to compare the present stage of Indian revolution to the October stage and borrow the strategy verbatim.

The polit bureau after delivering severe admonitions to the Andhra secretariat for having attempted such differentiation goes headlong to quote a passage from the *History of the CPSU (B)* to 'prove' that prerevolutionary Russia was as backward as India is today.

The conclusion drawn by the polit bureau from citing this passage is wrong in two respects. Firstly, prerevolutionary Russia may be spoken as 'backward' when compared with the advanced west, but it is wrong to say that it was as backward as India is. Secondly, this equating is being done to fight against those who advance arguments for differentiation, thus strengthening the former arguments which nullified the differentiation. Here is a passage from Stalin's *Marxism and the National and Colonial Question* ("China") characterising this type of deviation as trotskyist and nothing else:

"What is the fundamental position from which the Comintern and the communist parties generally approach the problems of the revolutionary movement in colonial and dependent countries?

"It is a strict *differentiation* between revolution in imperialist countries, countries that oppress other peoples, and revolution in colonial and dependent countries, countries that suffer from the imperialist oppression of other states. Revolution in imperialist countries is one thing: in those countries the bourgeoisie is the oppressor of other peoples; it is counterrevolutionary in all stages of the revolution; the national element, as an element in the struggle for emancipation, is absent in these countries. Revolution in colonial and dependent countries is another thing: in these countries the oppression exercised by the imperialism of other states is one of the factors of revolution; the oppression cannot but affect the national bourgeoisie also: the national bourgeoisie, at a certain stage and for a certain period, may support the revolutionary movements of its country against imperialism, and the national element, as an element in the struggle for emancipation, is a revolutionary factor. Not to make this differentiation,

not to understand this difference and to identify revolution in imperialist countries with revolution in colonial countries, is to depart from the road of Marxism, from the road of Leninism, and adopt the road of those who support the Second International.

"This is what Lenin said on the subject in his report on the national and colonial question at the second congress of the Comintern:

" 'What is the *most important and fundamental* idea of our theses? It is the *distinction* between *oppressed* and *oppressor* peoples. We emphasise this distinction, unlike the Second International and bourgeois-democrats.'

"The fundamental mistake of the opposition is that they do not understand and will not admit this difference between the one type of revolution and the other type of revolution.

"The fundamental mistake of the opposition is that they *identify* the 1905 revolution in Russia, an imperialist country, which oppressed other peoples, with the revolution in China, an oppressed country, a semicolonial country, which is forced to resist the imperialist oppression of other states.

"With us in Russia, in 1905, the revolution was directed against the bourgeoisie, against the liberal bourgeoisie, in spite of the fact that it was a bourgeois-democratic revolution. Why? Because the liberal bourgeoisie of an *imperialist* country is bound to be counterrevolutionary. And that is why the bolsheviks at that time did not and could not consider temporary blocs and agreements with the liberal bourgeoisie. On these grounds, the opposition assert that the same attitude should be adopted in China in all stages of the revolutionary movement, and that temporary agreements and blocs with the national bourgeoisie in China are impermissible at all times and under all circumstances. But the opposition forget that only people who do not understand and will not admit that there is a difference between revolution in oppressed countries and revolution in oppressor countries can talk like this, that only people



forsaking Leninism and joining the followers of the Second International can talk like this."

We have discussed above the nature and gravity of the mistakes in the documents of the polit bureau—how they, starting with relegating the aspect of imperialist oppression and enslavement into the background, ended with clean bypassing the national-liberationist aspect of our struggle and nullifying the distinction between revolution in independent imperialist countries and revolution in colonial and dependent countries. It is no wonder that once one commits the blunder of ignoring the fact that imperialism grips India 'octopus-like', one cannot but drift further and commit the rest of the consequent errors which in their nature are very serious and grave.

This mistake of underrating the significance of imperialist grip had been brought to the notice of the polit bureau as early as 2 May 1949, in a letter by C. Rajeswara Rao.

He writes:

"(b) Secondly, it is said in the thesis that imperialism is the leading force in the combine and that the bourgeoisie 'is granted a share in the state power' not full power; and that the combine is described as a 'new line-up of imperialism, princes, landlords and the bourgeoisie' (note the order). 'In a new state, therefore, the national bourgeoisie shares power with imperialism, with the latter still dominating indirectly.' Now, the *Tactical Line* says that the Indian bourgeoisie is the 'fighting partner and leading force in the combine', that 'the bourgeoisie has not only improved its position in relation to feudal elements, but also in relation to imperialism' and that 'in the bargaining between imperialism and the bourgeoisie, the feudal princes act as the allies of the bourgeoisie, i.e. as its satellites'. Of course in the end it is also said that 'the bourgeoisie is tied to the imperialists'. Taking the thing as a whole, the impression is that the bourgeoisie has strengthened its position 'in relation to imperialism', and has transferred itself from a secondary force into a leading force in the combine, acting within the framework of

compromise when the leading economic and political strings are kept in the hands of imperialism. This is a very big political departure from the thesis, which has to be recognised."

Again explaining the discussion on the point elsewhere in the same letter, he writes:

"(f) Has the Indian bourgeoisie strengthened itself in relation to imperialism? The secretariat comrades (P. Sundarayya could not participate in discussion on this point) feel that the formulation in the document *Tactical Line* that 'bourgeoisie has not only improved its position in relation to feudal elements, but also in relation to imperialism' is wrong, though it is qualified later by saying that 'it is still tied to imperialism'. This leads to the wrong understanding of underestimating the daily tightening grip of not only British imperialism but of American monopolists also. (it is to be noted that India has already taken a loan of 90 million dollars and is going to take more—Matthai's budget speech), and consequent blunting of the edge of exposure of the aggressive designs of Anglo-American imperialists to make India their reactionary war base."

Besides this a number of articles by Soviet and other communist writers had appeared in the press, where this aspect of imperialist grip on India is specially stressed. Then why did the polit bureau refuse to reconsider its position and stick to its guns till the time of the editorial in the organ of the Cominform bureau?

Why does the polit bureau even after being pulled up by the Cominform bureau try to explain it away in its latest document as though it is a small error which crept in while 'combating the reformists, who maintained nothing has changed'?

Well, they 'combated the reformists'! Very well, they 'correctly unmasked' the sham independence! Only a small mistake of 'failure to underline' the grip of imperialist has 'led to two serious errors'! Anyway we are asked to believe so.

In this connection it is also necessary to clear another point that has arisen here. Is it a fact that someone has said that nothing has changed subsequent to the Mountbatten award? In the entire document of *Tactical Line* the polit bureau cites no other instance except on what is alleged to have been said by the Andhra secretariat. Has the Andhra secretariat said so? Nowhere has it said so. It was only in one connection the following was stated by the Andhra secretariat in the *Draft Note*, "whereas in the presentday India, by the Mountbatten award and subsequent so-called national government, nothing has been smashed of the imperialist-feudal state machinery, but simply got political power shared by the dominant bourgeoisie. It is not the entire capitalist class that gets benefited by this compromise but only the big business houses that have entered into deals with the British capitalists. Not to speak of the toiling masses, the middle bourgeoisie will also be devoured as the economic crisis deepens."

First of all, what is exactly said here is "nothing has been smashed", and not "nothing has been changed". This distortion, though it looks small, a mere little change of a word, is a dangerous one.

Secondly, the statement "nothing has been smashed" in the given context is perfectly correct.

It is unimaginable how the polit bureau out of this could create the ghost of the formulation "nothing has been changed" and conduct a 'heroic' fight, and land itself in the position that "everything has changed", i.e. the British imperialists' grip on, and the colonial status of India, etc.

Is it not audacious on the part of the polit bureau to thrust this formulation in the mouth of the Andhra secretariat? Is it not a fact that the Andhra secretariat was complimented openly in the second party congress for having fought against the reformist politics and stand of those who took the position of "nothing has been changed"? Is it not by recognising this contribution of Andhra secretariat that B. T. Ranadive, while introducing the panel for

the central committee in the second congress, had remarked: "I have nothing to add about the Andhra comrades. My only grievance is that they have not fought enough and more doggedly"? And is it not simply unimaginable that the Andhra secretariat, which has been consistently voicing its opposition since 1944 to the reformist policies and practice of our old central committee could plunge headlong into the grossest reformist formulation that "nothing has changed", hardly one month after the second congress (the Andhra secretariat's *Draft Note* was prepared in April 1948)!

Yet the polit bureau chooses to characterise the Andhra secretariat so. Something is very seriously wrong somewhere. It is not only a failure to subject one's own mistakes to ruthless selfcriticism, but also a very dangerous way of reading and interpreting innerparty documents prepared by others. The central committee must take note of this. As the great Lenin says:

"Not he is wise who makes no mistakes. There are no such men nor can there be. He is wise who makes not very serious mistakes and who knows how to correct them easily and quickly."

The pity is that our polit bureau has made very serious mistakes and yet does not know how to correct them.

### III. STAGE, STRATEGY AND THE SLOGAN OF PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY

We have already pointed out in the introduction to this draft how the political thesis has been conveniently vague and confusing with regard to the stage of our revolution. The thesis says, "It means that the people's democratic revolution has to be achieved for the completion of the tasks of democratic revolution and the simultaneous building up of socialism."

That this conception of the precise stage and strategy is not merely vague but wrong can be proved by the following statements of the authors of the draft thesis,

statements made both during and after the second congress.

"It has been characterised in this document that the struggle for democratic revolution gets intertwined with the struggle for socialism and there can be no two stages of revolution. It is the same type as in Yugoslavia. That is our aim. That is, there is no conception that the bourgeois-democratic revolution must be built first and then the socialist revolution and in between something else will happen. It is one single revolution, based upon the broad class alliance of the workers, peasants, the toiling middle class and the progressive intelligentsia. That constitutes the class alliance of this revolution which begins by ending all the old remnants of the old feudal order and straightforwardly goes toward the building up and establishment of socialism" (Bhowani Sen's speech in the second party congress, printed in the pamphlet *Opening Reports by Comrade B. T. Ranadive and Comrade Bhowani Sen on the Draft Political Thesis*).

"On behalf of the central committee it was made clear that a people's democratic state itself meant the dictatorship of the proletariat. It was also stated that in the present phase of the general crisis of capitalism after the second world war, a people's democratic state represents a specific form of class alliance led by the proletariat and becomes the instrument of completing not only the people's democratic revolution but also carrying it forward to the achievement of socialism" (*Review of the Second Congress*).

Is it not ideological bankruptcy to say that "there can be no two stages of revolution"? Is it permissible to say categorically "that a people's democratic state itself meant the dictatorship of the proletariat", without understanding the different stages and their different peculiarities? Is it any wonder that certain comrades start arguing on the basis of this that our revolution is basically socialist, though as a byproduct it has to fulfil a lot of democratic tasks? Is it not exactly against such arguments the Andhra

secretariat is compelled to fight? Is it not in this connection that the Andhra secretariat quoted extensively from Mao, from his pamphlet *New Democracy*, wherein Mao had to fight out 'all-in-one-stroke' sloganmongers in the Chinese Communist Party? Was it not against this attempt of the Andhra secretariat that the polit bureau took up cudgels against the Andhra secretariat and Mao? .

Before we elaborate all these points let us take up the question of confusing the stages. Does Marxism-Leninism allow this muddling up of the stages? Let us see what Lenin and Stalin had said on this:

"But as a matter of fact when he (i.e. Lenin) criticised the tactics of the mensheviks, he at the same time exposed the tactics of international opportunism; and when he substantiated the Marxist tactics in the period of bourgeois revolution and drew the distinction between bourgeois revolution and socialist revolution, he at the same time formulated the fundamental principles of the Marxist tactics in the period of transition from the bourgeois revolution to the socialist revolution" (*History of the CPSU-B*).

In the book *Two Tactics* there are innumerable statements of Lenin insisting on the distinction between the two stages of revolution, i.e. democratic and socialist. Let us quote some of them.

"To confuse the petty-bourgeois struggle for a complete democratic revolution with the proletarian struggle for socialist revolution spells political bankruptcy for a socialist. Marx's warning to this effect is quite justified. But it is for this very reason that the slogan 'revolutionary communes' is erroneous, because the very mistake committed by the communes that have existed in history is that they confused the democratic revolution with the socialist revolution."

"On the other hand, two totally dissimilar questions are confounded, viz the question of our participation in one of the stages of the *democratic* revolution and the question of the *socialist* revolution. Indeed, the 'conquest of power' by social-democracy is a socialist revolution, nor

can it be anything else if we use these words in their direct and usually accepted sense. If, however, we are to understand these words to mean the conquest of power for a democratic revolution and not for a socialist revolution, then what is the point in talking not only about participation in a provisional revolutionary government but also about the 'conquest of power' *in general*. Obviously our 'conferencers' were not very clear themselves as to what they should talk about: the democratic or the socialist revolution."

"He (the conferencer) will not be able to tell him (a worker) that this (Paris Commune) was the name given to a workers' government that once existed, which was unable to and could not at that time distinguish between the elements of democratic revolution and those of a socialist revolution which confused the tasks of fighting for a republic with those of fighting for socialism... Does this not reveal the very mistake which they unsuccessfully tried to accuse us of having committed, i.e. confusing a democratic revolution with a socialist revolution, between which none of the 'communes' could differentiate?"

"We all draw a distinction between bourgeois revolution and socialist revolution, we will absolutely insist on the necessity of drawing a strict line between them; but can it be denied that in history individual, particular elements of one revolution and the other become interwoven? Have there not been a number of socialist movements and attempts at establishing socialism in the period of democratic revolution in Europe? And will not the future socialist revolution in Europe still have to do a great deal that has been left undone in the field of democracy?"

Stalin while fighting the deviations of the opposition in the CPSU(B), when they were found distorting the directions of the Communist International and Lenin regarding the Chinese revolution, observed:

"Now as to the stages of the Chinese revolution. The opposition have got themselves so entangled that they are

denying that there are any stages whatsoever in the development of the Chinese revolution. But were there ever revolutions without certain stages of development? Did not our revolution have its stages of development? Take Lenin's 'April Theses' and you will see that Lenin discerned two stages in our revolution: the first stage was the bourgeois-democratic revolution, with the agrarian movement as its main axis; the second stage was the October revolution with the seizure of power by the proletariat as its main axis. What are the stages in the Chinese revolution? In my opinion there should be three: the first stage was the revolution of the general national united front, the Canton period, when the revolution was striking chiefly at foreign imperialism, and the national bourgeoisie supported the revolutionary movement; the second stage is the bourgeois-democratic revolution, after the national troops reached the Yangtse river, when the national bourgeoisie deserted the revolution and the agrarian movement grew into a mighty revolution of tens of millions of peasants (the Chinese revolution is at present in the second stage of its development); the third stage is the soviet revolution, which has not yet come about but which will come about. Whoever does not understand that there are no revolutions without definite stages of development, whoever does not understand that there are three stages in the development of the Chinese revolution, understands nothing either of Marxism or of the Chinese question."

These quotations cited from Lenin and Stalin amply go to prove that the position taken by our polit bureau, expressed through the extract from Bhowani Sen's speech referred to above, is definitely wrong and constitutes fundamental departure from Marxism-Leninism.

Firstly, the polit bureau ignores and brushes aside Lenin's dictum "We all draw a distinction between bourgeois revolution and socialist revolution, we will absolutely insist on the necessity of drawing a strict line between them..." This is the first departure.

Secondly, by making such an oversimplified statement



as that "there are no two stages of revolution", etc. it attempts to dispense with the necessity of stages in our revolution. This is the second fundamental departure.

Thirdly, by stating "That constitutes the class alliance of this revolution (workers, peasants, etc.)", which begins by ending all the remnants of old feudal order and straightforwardly goes towards the building of and establishment of socialism", it attempts to dispense with the necessity of two separate class alliances for the two stages of the revolution. In a word, it visualises the same class alliance both for democratic and socialist stages. This constitutes, in our opinion, another fundamental departure from the Leninist-Stalinist conception of democratic revolution passing into socialist revolution.

Let us see what Lenin says on this point:

"First with the 'whole' of the peasantry against the monarchy, against the landlords, against the medieval regime (and to that extent, the revolution remains bourgeois, bourgeois-democratic). Then with the poorest peasants, with the semiproletarians, with all the exploited, against capitalism including the rural rich, the kulaks, the profiteers, and to that extent the revolution becomes a socialist one" (*The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky*).

Or, the same in other words of Lenin:

"At the head of the whole people, and particularly of the peasantry—for complete freedom for consistent democratic revolution, for a republic! At the head of all the toilers and the exploited—for socialism" (*Two Tactics*).

Such is the Leninist conception of stages and alliances.

But, as we have already observed, the polit bureau made a departure from all this which has a number of serious consequences.

Firstly, it leads to the failure to understand in concrete the classes and sections which are interested in democracy and to utilise the reserves in full in the onward march of the struggle of the proletariat for proletarian dictatorship and socialism.

Further, it lands in the deviation, as some are already suffering from, that in the 'present world setup' and in accordance with that, in our country, the classes and sections which are interested in socialism are the only classes that are interested in democracy. That is to say, the class alliance that is necessary for, and is capable of, effecting socialist revolution is alone capable of fighting for people's democratic revolution and none else.

Secondly, it leads to the dangerous illusion that all the classes and sections in the alliance for the people's democratic revolution would continue to be allies for the stage of socialist transformation also. This would screen new class struggle that would open up with the end of the first stage of people's democratic revolution and the beginning of socialist transformation and hence would take the proletariat unawares.

It is against this Lenin warns thus:

"The success of the peasant uprising, the victory of the democratic revolution will but clear the way for a genuine and decisive struggle for socialism on the basis of a democratic republic. In this struggle the peasantry as a land-owning class will play the same treacherous, vacillating part as is being played at present by the bourgeoisie in the struggle for democracy. To forget this is to forget socialism, to deceive oneself and others as to the real interests and tasks of the proletariat" (*Two Tactics*).

Is not the significance of this warning all the greater in our case where besides all the peasantry even some sections of the bourgeoisie also may remain in the people's democratic alliance?

In other words, the hegemony of the proletariat in the people's democratic revolution is wrongly considered to be enough to build complete socialism without steadily advancing to the full dictatorship of the proletariat.

Now let us come to another equally significant formulation made in the *Review of the Second Congress* that "a people's democratic state itself meant the dictatorship of the proletariat".

Does not this loose formulation lead to wrong conclusions, particularly in relation to the slogan we have advanced for the present stage of our revolution in India, i.e. the people's democratic revolution? Does not this give scope for certain elements to argue that what we are immediately striving for is the dictatorship of the proletariat? Is it not a fact basing on such slipshod formulation that some began to equate the present stage of our revolution to the stage of October revolution? That it is so can be seen from the following:

"In a nutshell, my position is that the present stage of the Indian revolution corresponds broadly to the second stage of the Russian revolution, i.e. after February revolution; but leading to October... But yet the present stage of the Indian revolution corresponds to the second stage of Russian revolution" (P. Sundarayya's note to the polit bureau on the Andhra secretariat's *Draft Note*).

Leaving aside fuller discussion of this issue for a while, which we will take up subsequently let us assert in brief the meaning of the concept of people's democracy.

The concept of people's democracy implies basically two things: Firstly, the proletarian hegemony, and secondly, its transitional character of passing through different stages to realise the full dictatorship of the proletariat.

It is also necessary to recognise the fact of the distinctive features which distinguish the people's democracies of Central and Eastern Europe from the people's democracies of colonial and semicolonial countries.

Further, the concept of people's democracy does not preclude the possibility of alliance with certain sections of the bourgeoisie at a certain stage, whereas in the Leninist concept of the dictatorship of the proletariat, the proletariat and its party do not and cannot share power with any other class.

How clumsy it would look to equate loosely people's democratic state with that of the dictatorship of the proletariat as was done in the abovequoted passage of the

polit bureau can be seen from the following observation of Stalin:

"The hegemony of the proletariat was the embryo of, and the transitional stage to, the dictatorship of the proletariat" (*Foundations of Leninism*).

It was against the background of the confusion created by the polit bureau and confronted with the acute stage of the Telangana struggle and its problems like the constitution and composition of the village committees, etc.—where by then itself in nearly 2500 villages people's administration was set up—that the Andhra secretariat was called upon to discuss anew this question of stage and strategy. Thus it is evident that it is not in the nature either of mere academic interest or of general enthusiasm for abstract discussion that the problem was taken up again soon after the second party congress.

It is also evident, as is already shown that confining to the letter of the thesis, which is vague, ambiguous, etc., it is difficult to clarify the issue.

The Andhra secretariat took up the position against the slogan of October stage thus: "India like China is semi-colonial and semifeudal in character. Like that of Chinese feudal warlords, our states and feudal princes remain to be liquidated as sores on the face of our country. Like the Chinese bourgeoisie of 1927, Indian bourgeoisie has, at the present, almost started a civil war by its cruel attack on all democratic forces of the country, headed by the working class and the Communist Party. The Indian bourgeoisie, afraid of the growing revolutionary forces, went under the wings of foreign imperialism to obey its dictates. There in China the fruits of the revolution were harvested by the national bourgeoisie, whereas in India the fruits of sixty years of national movement have been harvested by the Indian bourgeoisie, by sharing political power with imperialism. Here, as in China, the bourgeoisie has left intact the feudal allies, which it wants to utilise in the course of its counterrevolution.

"The offensive launched by the Nehru government

against the Communist Party of India is part of the international offensive started by world imperialism. It is an offensive by which it ranges itself against all progressive and democratic forces of the world. To put it bluntly, this offensive is practically nothing but a cruel civil war let loose by the imperialist-bourgeois-feudal combine against working class, peasants, and other toiling masses...

"This is the picture present before us which says that India is essentially a colonial country in all its social, political and economic aspects. Hence the stage of our revolution is also essentially bourgeois-democratic; but it is not a bourgeois-democratic revolution of the old type; but of a new type led by the proletariat and correctly called new democratic revolution. This is also expressed in the term people's democratic revolution. The present stage of our revolution essentially, though not exactly, is similar to that of the present stage of Chinese revolution, the stage that opened since 1927 bourgeois offensive against communists and working class. Though Chinese comrades have fought for more than 20 years and grown in quality and quantity, the stage remains yet the same to be fulfilled. Further we, in India, have, almost like that of Chinese democratic forces in the post-1927 period, entered into a definite stage. Of course, the present radically changed international background will greatly help us and ease our task when compared to Chinese brethren who had a prolonged period of twenty years and more of tortuous civil war, and yet have to complete it victoriously" (*Draft Note of the Andhra Secretariat*).

How does the polit bureau read and clarify this?

The *Tactical Line* says "Both Nageswara Rao (Sundarayya) and the secretariat have turned Marxism upside down... The secretariat decided it is the stage of February revolution, since it does not want to fight the rich peasant—nothing has changed—only big business gone over. new democratic revolution carried as only antifeudal, etc. Nageswara Rao imagines another set of relations."

The polit bureau does not stop here. It ridicules the en-

tire thing and brands "both make a mockery of Marxism", who have "turned Marxism upside down".

Now, coming to the issue, is it factually correct as the polit bureau asserts that the "secretariat decided it is the stage of February revolution"? Do not the passages from the Andhra secretariat's *Draft Note* quoted above prove just the opposite? How shall we characterise this except as wanton distortion on the part of the polit bureau? Yet it did it and circulated it among the entire party ranks and the public in India and also abroad.

Coming to the question of the present stage and strategy, the Andhra secretariat insisted upon adopting the line of the pamphlet *New Democracy* by Mao, with necessary modifications if any. The secretariat quoted in its document extensively from Mao in support of its line (the Andhra secretariat's *Draft Note* consisted of hardly 18 pages half foolscap and out of these nearly five pages were occupied by quotations from Mao).

How does the polit bureau sum up the stand of the Andhra secretariat?

Firstly, by a ridiculous shifting a position. We have seen just above how the Andhra secretariat is alleged to have said, the present stage of our revolution is the February stage. Wonderfully enough, in the same breath it is stated that the secretariat has said it is a new democratic stage!

Secondly, is it a fact that, as the polit bureau alleges, "the class content however is not defined", meaning thereby that the content of the class alliance of new democratic revolution is not defined? The following quotations from the *Draft Note of the Andhra Secretariat* are a crying proof how baseless the polit bureau allegation is:

"The first stage of the revolution in colonial and semi-colonial countries—though according to its social nature—is fundamentally still a bourgeois-democratic one of which the above requirements still basically call for a clearance of the way of capitalist development—yet despite this, the revolution is no longer the old wholesale bourgeois revolution for the building up of a capitalist society

and a state of bourgeois dictatorship type; but a new type of revolution wholly or partly led by the proletariat, the first stage of which aims at setting up of a new democratic society, a new state of the combined dictatorship of all revolutionary classes. The fundamental character of this revolution will never vary until the arrival of the stage of socialist revolution though during its progress, it may pass through several minor stages in accordance with the possible changes in the attitude of enemies and alliances."

Continuing further the note says:

"To put it more concretely, let us quote Mao's analysis where he discusses the classes in the democratic front.

" 'Who form the revolutionary democratic groups?

" 'The workers are of course the most thorough revolutionary democrats. Besides the workers the peasants form the largest revolutionary democratic group.

" 'All peasants with the exception of those rich farmers unable to shake off their tails of feudalism, are taken by the slogan of land to the tiller.

" 'The lower middle class in cities and towns is another revolutionary democratic group because the development of agricultural productivity made possible by the policy of land to the tiller, benefits them.

" 'The upper middle class forms a vacillating group. It favours land to the tiller because it too wants a market. But, at the same time, they fear the policy because they own land.

" 'Who are the sworn enemies of revolution?

" 'Those who are resolutely opposed to the policy are the groups within the Kuomintang who represent the class of big landlords and big business and compradores.'

"Mao further elaborating on this issue in his latest report to the central committee of the Communist Party of China has formulated clearly in describing the enemies of the Chinese revolution, and says,

" 'The monopoly capital merged with state capital becomes state-monopoly capitalism. This monopoly capitalism intimately merged with foreign imperialism and do-

mestic landlord class and old type rich peasant becomes compradore feudal state-monopoly capitalism. This is the economic foundation of Chiang's reactionary regime. This state-monopoly capitalism not only oppresses the workers and the peasants but also oppresses the petty bourgeoisie and injures the middle bourgeoisie.

"The petty bourgeoisie and middle bourgeoisie oppressed and injured by this class and its state power, although they too are bourgeoisie, may however participate in the new democratic revolution or maintain neutrality. They have no connections or comparatively fewer connections with imperialism. They are real national bourgeoisie. Wherever the state power of new democracy exists, these classes must firmly and unhesitatingly be protected.

"Petty bourgeoisie mentioned here refers to the small-scale industrial and commercial capitalists who hire workers and shop employees.

"The existence and development of middle capital elements here, under these conditions, are not all dangerous. The same applies to the new rich peasant economy which will necessarily come into being in the rural areas after the agrarian revolution.

"The new democratic revolution is to eliminate only feudalism and monopoly capitalism, only the landlord class and bureaucratic bourgeoisie (big bourgeoisie), not capitalism in general and not middle bourgeoisie and petty bourgeoisie.'

"Again Mao, in the same report positively asserts the strategy of new democratic revolution in more definite and more concrete terms.

"Our line is to rely on poor peasants and solidly unite with the middle peasants (not as some of our comrades say 'neutralise them') to destroy feudal and semi-feudal exploitation system of the landlord class and the old type rich peasants.

"In the demarcation of class composition, care must



be taken not to commit the mistake of assigning those who are really middle peasants to the rich peasant category.

"All these are concrete policies that must be adopted by our party in carrying out the strategic task of solidly uniting the middle peasants."

"In another passage, the same is further elaborated thus:

"The basic principles must be noted here. Firstly, it is necessary to satisfy the demands of poor peasants and farm labourers—this is the important task of our agrarian reform. Secondly, it is necessary to resolutely unite middle peasants and not injure the basic principles, and the task of our agrarian reform will surely be triumphantly completed. In accordance with the principle of equal distribution, the surplus land and the portion of the properties of the old type rich peasants should be taken over for distribution. Because Chinese rich peasants, in general, are of heavy feudal and semifeudal exploiting nature—rich peasants at the same time collect rents and engage in usury and their conditions of hiring labour are semifeudal.

"...There should in general be differentiation between the rich peasants and the landlords."

Talking of the class alliance in India, the *Draft Note* says:

"By the compromise with the imperialism it is not the entire capitalist class which gets benefited, but only the few big business (elements) which have got into economic deals with British financiers. Let alone the toiling masses, the middle bourgeoisie and the rich peasantry, who have no feudal tails, will also be ground down by the imperialist-feudal-bigbusiness combine.

"This is the basis for the widest possible front against the above antinational and antipeople combine. The front must be based firmly on the workers, poor peasants and agricultural labourers with middle peasants and town petty bourgeoisie as allies. The middle bourgeoisie and rich peasants (without feudal tails) who vacillate between

the people and the antinational combine have to be neutralised as a class. However certain sections of the rich peasantry may participate in the revolution, though vacillating, in the areas where feudal landlords are all-powerful, dominating over rich peasants also, for example Telangana and Rayalaseema."

Do not these series of quotations cited above clearly, sharply and concretely define the class content of the new democratic stage? Yet all this does not make any sense to our polit bureau. Otherwise, how can it accuse us and assert that "class content is not however defined"? It is for the readers to understand and the polit bureau to explain. Still more amazing is the fact that in the very next sentences and in the very same breath, the polit bureau says it is defined, but the objection, as it says, "in so far as the new democracy is defined it is done so from opportunist quotation from Mao..." It goes without saying that this does not hold water in the face of the preponderant evidence that the Andhra secretariat's *Draft Note* has quoted everything and left nothing of all Mao has said concerning the stage and strategy in his book *New Democracy* and the cited report.

But then, we ask the polit bureau one question. Instead of utilising and quoting the passages that clearly define and state the class content of new democratic stage, and that were given extensively in the Andhra secretariat *Draft Note*, why does the polit bureau choose to quote just a mutilated phrase of four words (viz "dictatorship of many classes") and accuse the secretariat of the crime of opportunist quotation from Mao? Whose opportunism is it? Indeed, the boot is on the other leg!

After having hurled a lot of statements against the formulations in the Andhra secretariat's *Draft Note* concerning stage and strategy, such as "the secretariat decided that it is the stage of February", that it "is supposed to be new democratic", that its "class content however is not defined", and that in so far as it is defined "it is done from opportunist quotation of Mao", etc., the polit bureau

rejected the position of the Andhra secretariat and issued the document *People's Democracy* afresh.

Before we go into detailed examination of this document, we have to point out one thing: that it does not settle accounts with the erroneous formulations made earlier on the issue, those made in Bhowani Sen's speech, and in the *Review of the Congress*, both earlier referred to; i.e. the document nowhere states whether it continues the earlier pronouncements or makes a departure from them. Thus the party ranks are left in doubt.

The document *On People's Democracy* starts on a good premise that democratic and socialist stages are two links in one chain—the Leninist conception. The document cites very illuminating and pertinent quotations from Lenin and Stalin on the issue. But by pretending to apply these principles to the concrete situation, both in the world of today and India, the polit bureau completely departed from the Leninist concept, two links in one chain, and landed in the original position of one-stage revolution.

It worked itself up to this position with phrases like 'interlinking', 'intertwining', 'interweaving', 'interlacing', 'delayed democratic revolution ripening into socialist revolution', 'extreme nearness to socialist revolution', 'the same combination that brings about the proletarian revolution', and arriving at the conclusion that 'it (i.e. the stage of revolution) is mixed', meaning that the present stage of our revolution is a combination of both February and October (i.e. democratic and socialist) stages of the Russian revolution.

Thus, at one stroke, the interlinking conception becomes 'mixed' conception, i.e. back to the old mutton.

The polit bureau may point out to the following quotation and try to refute the above:

"It is not October—because, though we are eliminating the political rule of the bourgeoisie, we are not able to raise the slogan of the dictatorship of the proletariat immediately—because the intermediate strata, parties, classes have not yet exhausted their full possibilities, and there-

fore a bloc with them cannot be ruled out" (*On People's Democracy*).

We are of opinion that this is formal. It does neither reveal the mind of the polit bureau correctly nor is it the conclusion that emerges from the entire logic of the polit bureau, worked out in this and the other documents of the polit bureau. A volume of evidence can be cited to substantiate our contention.

Now let us examine it in detail.

Firstly, the document says: "One warning is necessary...of the correlation of forces as it exists" (*On People's Democracy*).

What does this convey? Does it not convey a wishful thought of skipping the democratic stage by a miracle? Even in the case of Russian revolution was it not a fact that the bolsheviks could advance to the slogan of dictatorship of the proletariat only after the dictatorship of workers and peasants was realised, though of course not in the way the Bolshevik Party had visualised but in a different way, in the form of dual power?

Here is what Lenin says:

"The revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry has already been realised, but in an extremely original form, and with a number of highly important modifications" ("Letters on Tactics—First Letter").

Does it not reveal that the bolsheviks could advance to the slogan of dictatorship of the proletariat only after realising the democratic stage, and not 'straight' as our polit bureau wishfully thinks?

The warning of the polit bureau only goes to strengthen the 'mixed' conception and its confusion.

Secondly, the document says:

"What place does fight against imperialism occupy... breaking away from the capitalist system" (*On People's Democracy*).

Do not the phrases the fight 'is to be carried on at a different level', 'freedom from world capitalist order—not

from this or that imperialism only', water down the anti-imperialist, national-liberationist, democratic character of the revolution, which stand in one measure or other has its own influence on the character of the stage of the revolution? Is it pardonable on the part of the polit bureau to clean ignore mentioning even a word in the concrete of British imperialism, and talk in a diffused general way like 'different level', 'world capitalist order', etc? Is it not in tune with the ultraleft phrasemongers who advance the slogan of socialist revolution, clean skipping the democratic stage? We feel it is.

Thirdly, is it not a fact that when the Andhra secretariat quoted Mao in its *Draft Note*, in order to refute the 'all-in-one-stroke' theorists, the polit bureau denounced it as erecting a Chinese wall, etc.?

Here is the passage from Mao, quoted by the Andhra secretariat, and taken exception to by the polit bureau:

"Though it goes without saying that the first step of the revolution which we are contemplating today will one day inevitably develop into second step, i.e. socialism and only in this realm of socialism can China become prosperous: Yet the present is no time to practise it. Socialism is out of the question before the tasks of the present revolution, the tasks of anti-imperialism and antifeudalism are fulfilled. The Chinese revolution can only be achieved in two stages: (a) new democracy: (b) socialism. And we should point out that the period over which the first step will expand will be a considerably long one. We are not idealists. We cannot place ideals over and above presentday life.

"It is correct then today that this stage of which the first should form the groundwork of the second must not be interrupted by a stage of bourgeois dictatorship. This alone is the proper Marxist method of understanding the course of development of our revolution. It is to suffer from worst illusions to assent to the suggestion that the democratic stage of the revolution has not its own specific tasks and time-table and it is possible to accomplish in one

stage the task which belongs to an entirely different stage; for instance, to try to accomplish the task of socialist stage simultaneously with that of the democratic. Such is the face of this 'all-in-one-stroke' which is pure idealism. It is not the proper way in which any revolutionary could think. It is known to everybody that both in the field of ultimate forms of social organisation and in the matter of practical working programme, the Communist Party has developed its outlook. That is, it has got a maximum and minimum programme. The new democracies of the present and socialism of the future are its two component parts to be carried out under the guidance of the whole ideology of communism."

How did the polit bureau attack this clarification of Mao on the Leninist principle of insistence on and distinction of stages? It called it 'erecting a Chinese wall'.

The political bureau does this despite the fact that the Andhra secretariat states specifically that "No Chinese wall can be erected between the new democratic and socialist stages of the revolution. The toilers having once achieved power under the leadership of the proletariat, will proceed to socialism 'peacefully' and without the necessity of another insurrection."

Does not the rejection of all this by the polit bureau amount to the position of 'all-in-one-stroke' theories, i.e. in our case, the 'mixed' one-stage theories? We hold so

Lastly, has not the polit bureau taken up the position that the present stage of our revolution is a struggle which constitutes the fight against entire capital, including the rich peasantry? Is not this position characterised by Lenin as indicative of socialist stage, thus: "Then, with the poorest peasants, with semiproletarians, with all the exploited, against capitalism, including the rural rich, the kulaks, the profiteers, and to that extent the revolution becomes a socialist one"?

The polit bureau says everything that strictly concerns the socialist stage and socialist strategy and yet calls it people's democratic stage and strategy! Is it not sheer self-

deception? Does not the position of the polit bureau coincide with those who advance the slogan of socialist revolution, however much it may say "It is not October because..." etc.? We think it does.

We have discussed enough to show how even the polit bureau's document, *On People's Democracy*, instead of clearing the confusion has only added to it; how, instead of correcting the previous erroneous formulations on this issue (Bhowani Sen's speech) etc., it has only continued it, despite the fact that it is supposed to be a clarification anew.

However we feel that the discussion on this topic will be far from complete without going into the allegation that Mao, by his definition of the new democratic dictatorship as the "united dictatorship of all anti-imperialist classes", etc. has confused the precise slogan of dictatorship of workers and peasants. There are very many suggestions in the polit bureau's document, *Tactical Line*, to this effect. But in the covering note to the documents of the polit bureau, which was written in December 1948 by C. Rajeswara Rao with the approval of the polit bureau, this attack on Mao was much more clear and open.

The covering note says:

"There is nothing more that Mao has added 'to the armoury of Marxism' in the matter of theoretical formulations, than what Lenin, Stalin or the Communist International have already said about the colonial revolutions; but, on the other hand, he has confused the precise and pregnant formulations made by the abovementioned by his loose and at times wrong formulations about new democracy and in other documents."

"(2) The provincial committee secretariat draft talks about Russia being 'more near to an advanced capitalist country' than India attaining the status of a 'semicolony' after the bourgeois compromise. Hence it draws the conclusion that the lessons of the Russian revolution do not so much apply to us at the present stage of our revolution as that of the Chinese revolution. It takes the loose and

some erroneous formulations of Mao like 'dictatorship of the revolutionary classes', 'new democratic revolution being mainly against feudalism', 'the middle bourgeoisie to be neutralised, etc., and mechanically applies to our revolution."

All this is said to prove only one thing, i.e. the slogan of dictatorship of workers and peasants is Leninist and clarification of it as 'united dictatorship of all anti-imperialist classes' is anti-Leninist and reformist. Is it a fact? A closer examination of the issue, how Lenin arrived at this slogan and what it implies, will prove that it is not a fact.

Lenin arrived at this slogan, dictatorship of workers and peasants, basing on the slogan of Marx, who analysing the democratic revolution of 1848 in Germany, advanced the slogan of people's dictatorship. Lenin explains in his *Two Tactics* this aspect in a sufficiently elaborate manner. To quote from Lenin:

"In Marx's opinion, the national assembly should have 'eliminated from the regime actually existing in Germany everything that contradicted the principle of sovereignty of the people', then it should have 'consolidated the revolutionary ground on which it rested in order to make the sovereignty of the people, won by revolution, secure against all attacks'.

"Thus the tasks which Marx set before the revolutionary government or dictatorship in 1848 amounted in substance above all to a democratic revolution, viz defence against counterrevolution and the actual elimination of everything that militated against the sovereignty of the people. And this is no other than a revolutionary-democratic dictatorship.

"To proceed: which classes, in Marx's opinion, could and should have achieved this task (actually to exercise to the end the principle of sovereignty of the people and to beat off the attacks of counterrevolution)? Marx speaks of the 'people'. But we know he always ruthlessly combated the petty-bourgeois illusions about the unity of the



'people' and about the absence of a class struggle within the people. In using the word 'people', Marx did not thereby gloss over class differences, but united definite elements capable of carrying the revolution to completion...

"With corresponding allowances for concrete national peculiarities and the substitution of serfdom for feudalism, all the propositions are fully applicable to Russia in 1905. There is no doubt that by learning from the experience of Germany, as elucidated by Marx, we cannot arrive at any other slogan for a decisive victory of the revolution than the slogan calling for a revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry. There is no doubt that the main components of the 'people', whom Marx in 1848 contrasted with the resisting reactionaries and the treacherous bourgeoisie, are the proletariat and the peasantry."

What does emerge from the above quotations that mainly concern the question and discussion here?

First, the concept of the 'people' does not gloss over the class differences, but only speaks of definite elements in a definite stage who are capable of carrying the revolution to completion.

Second, the "main components of the 'people'" spoken of here are workers and peasants.

Has Mao, in defining the class alliance of the revolution in the new democratic stage as the "united dictatorship of all anti-imperialist classes" been guilty of ignoring any basic aspects as stated above? In our opinion, no such guilt exists on his part. On the other hand, he has concretised the 'people' in the particular stage in detail. Has he overlooked the fact that the main components of the 'people' are workers and peasants? See what he says, below:

"Who form the revolutionary democratic groups?

"The workers are of course the most thorough revolutionary democrats. Besides the workers, the peasants form the largest revolutionary democratic group."

It is clear that Mao describes workers and peasants as the main component parts of the people.

Is it the Marxist way of understanding the slogan of dictatorship of workers and peasants to mean that it comprises only of workers and peasants, to the exclusion of other revolutionary sections, etc., when in reality it means workers and peasants as the main components and not the only components? Is it not to understand it mechanically?

For example, Stalin says, concerning the Chinese revolution, after the betrayal of the Kuomintang big bourgeoisie:

"Efforts must particularly be made to have the struggle in towns directed against the big bourgeoisie, and especially against the imperialists, so that the Chinese petty bourgeoisie and middle bourgeoisie should as far as possible be kept within the united front against the common enemy."

Does the polit bureau feel that the slogan of dictatorship of workers and peasants advanced for China by the Communist International in its colonial theses contradicts the above strategy advanced by Stalin?

Is not then the definition of new democratic strategy by Mao as "united dictatorship of all anti-imperialist classes" consistent with Lenin-Stalin teachings and Communist International? Undoubtedly, it is so. It is our polit bureau that departs from it and not Mao.

In this context it is necessary to point out another aspect of the problem. The polit bureau is inclined to forget a formulation the political thesis itself has made in this connection.

"It will be a people's democratic state based on the alliance of anti-imperialist classes workers, peasants and the oppressed petty bourgeoisie..."

Again, speaking of the new class alliance, the thesis says: "It is necessary to marshal the forces of the revolutionary people in a new way. i.e. to forge a new alliance of all the classes for whom the success of the democratic revolution is vital."

Why does the polit bureau go hammer and tongs at Mao for having said "united dictatorship of all anti-imperialist

classes" when the political thesis itself says "alliance of anti-imperialist classes" etc.? How has it been permissible to 'water down' the 'precise and pregnant' slogan of dictatorship of workers and peasants by adding 'oppressed petty bourgeoisie' also in our thesis? How has it become 'loose' 'erroneous', etc., in case of Mao when he added the middle bourgeoisie also? Evidently the grouse of our polit bureau against Mao is that his objective analysis of the stage and the classes does not agree with the sectarian pseudoclass analysis made by our polit bureau. How else are we to explain this attack on this aspect?

Then coming to the concept 'people'. Did Mao gloss over the class differences among the people? Not in the least.

See how Mao defines 'people' in the particular stage.

"Who are the 'people'? At the present stage of China, the people are the working class, the class of the peasantry, the petty bourgeoisie and the national bourgeoisie. Under the leadership of the working class and Communist Party, these classes united in order to form their own state and to elect their own government in order to establish over the lackeys of imperialism..." ("Dictatorship of People's Democracy").

It is thus very clear that Mao's formulations on this are neither 'erroneous' nor 'loose', but completely correct. Only the polit bureau's understanding and interpretation of the formulations in question are mechanical, dogmatic and sectarian.

We think it necessary here to explain the concept 'people's democracy'.

In this connection, one must keep in mind three fundamental points when one wants to understand the concept 'people's democracy'.

What are these three fundamental points?

(1) In its class content, people's democracy implies hegemony of the proletariat in one measure or other, according to the stages and the maturity of the revolutionary forces.

(2) In its class content and the measure of proletarian hegemony exercised, people's democracy passes through different stages of development.

In the colonies and semicolonies, the class content of the dictatorship of people's democracy at the early stage is, according to Mao:

"The working class, the class of peasantry, the petty bourgeoisie, and national bourgeoisie (i.e. middle bourgeoisie—*Andhra Secretariat*) under the leadership of the working class and the Communist Party. These classes united in order to form their own state and to elect their own government."

But as people's democracy develops, i.e. the revolution advances, and with the progressive strengthening of proletarian hegemony in the state and exclusion of the bourgeois groups and parties, the class content also undergoes a radical change so that at this later stage people's democracy effectively fulfils the functions of dictatorship of the proletariat.

Throughout all the stages of development (i.e. from the earliest stage when it is a united dictatorship of all anti-imperialist or antifascist classes to the stage when it becomes crystallised as the dictatorship of the proletariat), it is called people's democratic state because the form remains essentially the same, viz people's democratic form, as distinct from the soviet form. But from this to confuse or mix up the earlier stages with the later stages and to equate people's democracy mechanically at all stages with the dictatorship of the proletariat would mean throwing overboard the fundamental teachings of Leninism-Stalinism as well as historical experience.

(3) As regards form, the people's democratic state, both in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe as well as in the colonies and semicolonies, is republican-democratic in form, as distinct from the soviet form. Even at the latter stage when it fulfils the functions of the dictatorship of the proletariat (as at present in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe) the form of the people's democratic

state is different from the soviet form which built socialism in the Soviet Union during 1922-35.

"The transition from capitalism to communism will certainly create a great variety and abundance of political forms, but their essence will inevitably be the same—the dictatorship of the proletariat", says Lenin (*The State and Revolution*).

The democratic-republican form of the state in which the functions of the dictatorship of the proletariat are exercised effectively today in the people's democracies of Central and Eastern Europe is a brilliant confirmation of this farsighted formulation of Lenin.

On the question of form comrades in our party have not generally disputed the above, i.e. how the people's democratic state throughout all its stages of development has its own form—the republican-democratic form—as distinct from the soviet form and how even at the later stages the functions of the dictatorship of the proletariat are exercised only through this form. It is true the understanding is not complete or deep enough, there are gaps in it to be filled up. But there is agreement on the basic facts abovestated and these facts are not contested (though their understanding on them still remains incomplete). That is why we do not propose to enter into any further detailed discussion here on the question of form.

On the question of class content of people's democracy there is confusion and controversy inside our party; and this controversy has a vital bearing on the question of present stage and strategy of our revolution in India since our slogan is people's democratic revolution. That is why it is necessary to go into a detailed discussion on the question of content of people's democracy.

Before entering into such a discussion, however, it is necessary to draw comrades' attention to one fact. It is that the specific deviation that has cropped up inside our party has come from a different end, from the type of deviation that occurred in the communist and workers' parties of the people's democracies of Eastern Europe,

which the leadership of those parties (Beirut, Dimitrov, and others), had to settle account with.

In the communist parties of the people's democracies of Eastern Europe as can be seen from the discussions and selfcriticism which were carried through inside those parties in 1948 and 1949, the main danger became the rightwing and bourgeois-nationalist deviation which sought to counterpose people's democracy to dictatorship of the proletariat, to present the road of people's democracy as a 'third' road between socialism and capitalism and to oppose the road of people's democracy to the soviet road. In order to overcome and smash this deviation, the leaders of these parties (Beirut, Dimitrov, and others) had to come forward and enunciate towards the end of 1948 and beginning of 1949 how people's democracy at this stage fulfils effectively in essence the function of the dictatorship of the proletariat, i.e. that their type of state is nothing but a variant of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Inside our party however the specific type of deviation that has cropped up on this question and that needs to be fought and overcome is the left-sectarian deviation. What does this deviation do?

(1) It seeks to mechanically equate people's democracy to dictatorship of the proletariat without regard to its stages of development in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe.

(2) It seeks to ignore the "essentially distinctive features which distinguish people's democracy in the colonial and dependent countries who are liberating themselves from the imperialist yoke from people's democracies in the countries of Central and Southeastern Europe" (Zhukov). It ignores the fact that the extent of the bourgeois-democratic tasks confronting people's democracy in the colonies and semicolonies oppressed by imperialism will be considerably greater than in the other less backward and more developed countries to whom colonial oppression, has been unknown or almost unknown.

(3) From all the above, it draws the left-sectarian conclusion that in our country, at the present stage, our slogan must be socialist revolution and the dictatorship of the proletariat on the ground that our immediate slogan too is people's democratic republic.

It is in order to overcome and smash this deviation—which leads to the most dangerous left-sectarian and left-adventurist practice—that the discussion below has to be concretely undertaken by us. Comrades must therefore try to understand the issue from this angle—from the angle of the theoretical and practical problems thrown up by our movement at the present stage—and not from the angle of an abstract academic discussion on people's democracy in general.

The two types of deviation abovementioned—one that occurred in some of the people's democracies of Central and Eastern Europe, the other that has occurred inside our party—are exactly similar to the ones against which Dimitrov warned in his report at the seventh world congress of the Communist International. Dimitrov gave this warning regarding the united-front governments that were visualised to be brought into existence in order to fight the growing menace of fascism. In appreciating it, one fact must be borne in mind by us, i.e. it would be wrong on our part to mechanically equate the united-front governments of which Dimitrov spoke in that particular context to the people's democratic states that came into existence in Europe after the defeat of fascism at the hands of the Red Army, the types of deviation are basically of the same nature which Dimitrov then warned against.

This is how Dimitrov put the issue:

"Fifteen years ago Lenin called upon us to focus all our attention on 'searching out forms of transition or approach to the proletarian revolution'. It may be put that in a number of countries the united-front government will prove to be one of the most important transitional forms. The 'left'-doctrinaries have always avoided this precept of Lenin's. Like the limited propagandists that they were,

they spoke only of 'aims', without ever worrying about 'forms of transition'. The right-opportunists, on the other hand, tried to establish a special 'democratic intermediate stage' lying between the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie and the dictatorship of the proletariat, for the purpose of instilling into the workers the illusion of a peaceful parliamentary procession from the one dictatorship to the other. This fictitious 'intermediate stage' they also called the 'transitional form', and even quoted Lenin on the subject! But this piece of swindling was not difficult to expose: for Lenin spoke of the form of transition and approach to the 'proletarian revolution', i.e. to the overthrow of the bourgeois dictatorship, and not of some transitional form between the bourgeois and the proletarian dictatorship."

Bearing this in mind, let us now go into the matter in detail.

### *(1) The Transitional Character of People's Democracy*

Some comrades have a typical way of arguing things to prove their contention that people's democracy at the first stage is equal to the dictatorship of the proletariat. They quote the following passage of Lenin in their support:

"The forms of bourgeois states are extremely varied, but in essence they are all the same: in one way or another, in the final analysis, all these states are inevitably the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie. The transition from capitalism to communism will certainly create a great variety and abundance of political forms, but their essence will inevitably be the same; the dictatorship of the proletariat" (*The State and Revolution*).

From this they build a syllogism thus: All transitional forms from capitalism to communism are essentially dictatorship of the proletariat; people's democracy is a transitional form from capitalism to communism; hence it is essentially a dictatorship of the proletariat.

This may be good formal logic, but not correct Marxism.

One could as well recall here what Lenin said in another



connection and context, reprimanding the 'lefts' saying that they go on repeating "simple, routine and, at a first glance, incontrovertible truths, such as: 'Three is more than two' but politics is more like algebra than arithmetic; but still more like higher mathematics than elementary mathematics" ("*Left-Wing*" *Communism*).

At the outset one must understand the precise context in which Lenin was speaking the above (i.e. regarding the state forms during the period of transition from capitalism to communism). In his pamphlet, *The State and Revolution*, Lenin was answering the Kautskyite distortion and repudiation of the dictatorship of the proletariat. It was in this context Lenin made the observation in question. He was taking cudgels against those who confuse the forms of state and the content of state. This point he has dealt with more thoroughly and in greater detail in his pamphlet *The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky*.

What he specifically stresses here is one remarkable formulation made by Marx, i.e.

"What I did that was new was to prove: (1) that the existence of classes is only bound up with particular, historic phases in the development of production; (2) that the class struggle necessarily leads to the dictatorship of the proletariat; (3) that this dictatorship itself only constitutes the transition to the abolition of all classes and to a classless society" (*The State and Revolution*).

Lenin fought the revisionists and reinstated the concept of dictatorship of the proletariat as part of the essence of the Marxist doctrine of the state. He concluded that to build socialism and communism without the dictatorship of the proletariat is impossible and unthinkable.

It must be noted, Lenin was also visualising different forms of the proletarian dictatorship. It is in keeping with this alone that he describes the proletarian dictatorship in Russia as "the soviets are the Russian form of the proletarian dictatorship" and as one of the forms of the dictatorship of the proletariat. It is to ram home this point, i.e.

not to confuse the content and the form of the proletarian dictatorship, that Lenin makes the observation in question, i.e. "The transition from capitalism to communism will certainly create a great variety and abundance of political forms, but their essence will inevitably be the same: the dictatorship of the proletariat."

This concept of the dictatorship of the proletariat as an instrument to effect transition of class society into classless society should not be mechanically equated as to mean that all the transitional stages to the dictatorship of the proletariat are by themselves the dictatorship of the proletariat. It is because of this wrong equation and interpretation that the comrades referred to above are taking up the position that all the transitional stages such as people's democratic dictatorship, democratic dictatorship of workers and peasants, etc., are nothing but the dictatorship of the proletariat in essence. And thus, following from this, in our case it is attempted to apply and advance the slogan of socialist revolution at the present stage in India on the ground that our slogan too is people's democratic republic.

But the entire historical experience and the teachings of Lenin and Stalin speak against this vulgarisation.

Are we to suppose that straight starting from Marx's slogan of people's dictatorship, during the German democratic revolution in 1848, the slogan of democratic dictatorship of workers and peasants and the slogan of the dictatorship of workers and poor peasants given by the bolsheviks, the slogan of people's democratic republics advanced in the Eastern European countries in the earlier stages, and the slogan of new democratic republic advanced in China by Mao—are all one and the same, and are only different names for the dictatorship of the proletariat? It is nothing but laughter-provoking.

What is the Marxist-Leninist definition of the dictatorship of the proletariat?

Stalin, in his book *Problems of Leninism*, quotes Lenin:

"The class which took political power into its hands did

so knowing that it took power alone. That is a part of the concept dictatorship of the proletariat. This concept has meaning only when the single class knows that it alone is taking power into its hands, and does not deceive itself or others with the talk about 'popular government elected by all, sanctified, by the whole people' " ("Speech at Transport Workers' Conference").

Explaining further that it is a special form of class alliance, Stalin says, "This special form of class alliance consists in that the guiding force of this alliance is the proletariat. This special form of alliance consists in that the leader in the state, the leader in the system of the dictatorship of the proletariat is one party, the party of the proletariat, the party of the communists, which does not and cannot share that leadership with other parties."

Now, is it not evident that in the above described transitional states, such as the dictatorship of workers and peasants, people's democracy of the first stage, etc. the proletariat and its party, at one stage or other, in one measure or other, had to share the political leadership with other classes and parties? If so how can one oversimplify them as to equate them with the concept dictatorship of the proletariat? It is definitely wrong.

Once these comrades dislodged from this position they will shift their position slightly and will begin to argue that the people's democratic dictatorship is in essence the dictatorship of the proletariat. Is this correct? This also is an oversimplification and in certain respects incorrect too. When can it be called in essence the dictatorship of the proletariat? For example, Stalin explains the significance of the slogan 'the dictatorship of workers and poor peasants', advanced on the eve of October thus:

"We marched towards October under the slogan of dictatorship of the proletariat and the poor peasantry, and in October, we put it into effect formally in as much as we had a bloc with the left socialist-revolutionaries and shared leadership with them although actually the dictatorship of the proletariat already existed, since we bolshe-

viks constituted the majority" ("The Party's Three Fundamental Slogans on the Peasant Problem").

This is what is characterised as 'actually' the dictatorship of the proletariat, even though the party of the proletariat shared power with left socialist-revolutionaries. Why? The vital factor here is the party of the proletariat, i.e. Communist Party, is already a majority in the state. This can be termed in 'essence' the dictatorship of the proletariat. Is it correct to assert that all the people's democratic republics that have come into existence in the East European countries are in essence dictatorship of the proletariat right from their inception? The facts speak against it. Besides sharing power with other parties, like the socialists and sometimes petty-bourgeois parties also, there were cases where the party of the proletariat, i.e. Communist Party, was a minority party in the government. Yet, thanks to the liberating role of the Soviet Union and its direct assistance, the working class could forge ahead and unite under the banner of single united Marxist parties, which enable them successfully to head the state. It is only when all the workers' parties united into single united Marxist parties, and became the unquestioned leaders and the majority in the governments, they could be unhesitatingly characterised as dictatorships of the proletariat in essence. It was at this stage of development only that Marxist leaders in those countries could characterise them as definite forms of proletarian dictatorship in essence.

We think now the matters are clear. Not that every transitional stage of the people's democratic state can be characterised the dictatorship of the proletariat or in essence the dictatorship of the proletariat. But certain minimum prerequisites are essential—unless one stoops to violate the basic tenets of Lenin-Stalin teachings.

This in brief is so far as the point about the concept of people's democracy is concerned.

Now to the second fundamental point about the concept people's democracy, i.e. proletarian hegemony:

The concept of people's democracy necessarily and inevitably implies the hegemony of the proletariat. Without the hegemony of the proletariat, every participation of the communist party in the government cannot be characterised as people's democracy. For example, in France and Italy the participation of the communists in the respective governments for a time has been observed by us all. But did we, or could one, call them people's democracies? No. Why? Unless some minimum conditions, strength and guarantee are there to exercise proletarian hegemony and steadily advance ahead to consolidate and transform that hegemony into the dictatorship of the proletariat, it will be wrong to call them so. No doubt the antifascist struggle and the partisan war that were conducted against Hitler's occupation armies were, in both the cases of France and Italy, under the hegemony of the working class and the Communist Party. This hegemony could not be transformed into hegemony in the governments that came into existence after the defeat of Hitler. This is to be explained, besides several internal factors and weaknesses prevailing in these countries, by the presence of Anglo-American imperialist armies as the 'liberators' and the advance of the real liberationist armies, the Red Army.

What is proletarian hegemony in the state?

In a nutshell, in the words of Stalin, "the hegemony of the proletariat was the embryo of and the transitional stage to, the dictatorship of the proletariat".

This pregnant formulation is missed by many when they speak of proletarian hegemony. What emerges from the above formulation? The following extremely rich ideas are expressed therein: (a) the hegemony is the embryonic form of the dictatorship of the proletariat; (b) it is a transitional stage to the dictatorship of the proletariat.

The proletariat and its party must be extremely conscious not only of its immense strength already expressed through the realisation of hegemony, but also of its stupendous tasks ahead in order to develop that embryo to its full mature form and complete the transition with-

out stopping the revolution halfway to the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Does it not once again clearly show that every stage of the hegemony of the proletariat exercised in people's democratic state cannot be mechanically equated to the dictatorship of the proletariat? Thus the earlier stages of hegemony embody the embryo and the latter and final is the 'child'. Embryo is not yet the 'child'. This is the correct meaning of Stalin's formulation.

But exactly this is the type of ridiculous mistake some of our comrades are sometimes falling into when they identify the concept of people's democracy at the first stage—without regard to the stages of its development etc.—with the dictatorship of the proletariat; and following from this formulate the present stage of our revolution in India as the stage of socialist revolution.

Besides these two fundamental points, the other points to be taken into account with respect to the concept people's democracy are:

Thirdly, the concept 'people' is neither homogeneous nor unchanging (in its class content). That is, it is unlike the strictly and rigidly defined class terms like the proletariat, agricultural labour, etc. It is a heterogeneous and mixed concept, and changing (in its class content). Its class content changes depending on the alignment of the class forces, according to the different stages and phases of the development of the revolution. For example, during the antifascist war, in the fascist-occupied countries, all those classes and sections that were interested in the defeat of fascism and the defence of independence of their countries were rallied into what were known as the national front, popular front, fatherland front, antifascist front, people's front, etc. Undoubtedly those fronts included sections of the bourgeoisie besides the basic components of the people—workers and peasants. Thus, in this sense, and for that particular limited stage and period of the struggle alone, the term 'people's front' included sections of the bourgeoisie as part of the broad concept 'people'

comprising the front (though at a later stage, with the further accentuation of the struggle, the sections of the bourgeoisie betrayed and were thrown out of the front). That is how the concept 'people' is not homogeneous and fixed and is subject to change.

Fourthly, it is also necessary to take into account "the essentially distinctive features which distinguish people's democracy in the colonial and dependent countries who are liberating themselves from imperialist yoke, from people's democracy in the countries of Central and South-eastern Europe. The first and the main difference consists in the fact that in so far as in the colonies and the dependent countries, the cultural and economic development has been partially hampered and artificially stifled by imperialism, the extent of bourgeois-democratic tasks confronting people's democracy in these countries will be considerably greater than in the other less backward and more developed countries, to whom colonial oppression has been unknown or almost unknown.

"It is perfectly clear the people's democratic revolution in colonial and semicolonial countries cannot but bear in the first place an anti-imperialist and antifeudal character. Hence it follows that the people's democratic revolution in colonies must in its development go through a number of consecutive stages and the period of transition to the solution of socialist tasks, to the construction of socialist economy, in these countries may be more prolonged than in the other countries of people's democracy, which were not colonies" (E. Zhukov, "Problems of the National and Colonial Struggles after the Second World War").

Fifthly, the concept of people's democracy also, as we have seen in the concept of the 'people', is not a fixed static concept.

"The regime of people's democracy is constantly developing passing through a number of stages in its development. The alignment of class forces changes in the process of democratic development. During the first stage together with the representatives of peasants, workers and intel-

lectuals, representatives of the bourgeoisie were permitted to participate in the administration of the state in as much as they loyally cooperated with the people's government. Subsequently, in the course of the democratic development, to the extent as to the socialist nature of the new government grew increasingly apparent, temporary fellow-travellers dropped out" (F. Konstantinov, "Countries of People's Democracy on Road to Socialism").

Briefly, thus, it is not one-stage and 'all-in-one-stroke' concept.

These are the fundamental and main characteristics of the concept people's democracy, in brief.

Thus the concept people's democracy can be correctly and comprehensively understood only if we take into account the concept hegemony of the proletariat, its transitional character, the class understanding of the term 'people', the features that distinguish people's democracies in colonial and dependent countries from the Central and East European people's democracies, the character of its constantly developing and passing through a number of stages finally getting crystallised as the dictatorship of the proletariat, and the people's democratic form of government in which it is exercised as distinct from the soviet form.

Missing any of these will land us in serious mistakes of stage, strategy and tactics.

In the light of these where lie the basic mistakes of the polit bureau on this issue?

Besides the other things we have earlier examined, two things stand out.

(a) The polit bureau has not understood its transitional character correctly.

The transitional character of people's democracy as understood by our polit bureau is the stage in which the entire bourgeoisie is excluded from political power. It does not ask at what stage of its development this exclusion takes or has taken place, but concludes confidently



as if at no stage the inclusion of certain sections of bourgeoisie does take place. It is neither true in the case of East European democracies in their early stages, nor will it be so, more particularly, in our case.

The phrases the polit bureau uses such as "bourgeoisie is thrown out of political power, but not yet economically vanquished etc." actually speak of a different transitional stage, even after the proletarian dictatorship is established. The transitional stage under the dictatorship of the proletariat is a stage which begins to transform class society into a classless society.

Precisely the lack of understanding and vulgarisation of the above has landed the polit bureau into the 'mixed' stage, single stage, etc. revolution.

(b) The polit bureau has also failed to distinguish the distinctive features between people's democracy in colonial and dependent countries, who are liberating themselves from the imperialist yoke, and the people's democracy in the East European countries.

The polit bureau asserts that it has deduced from Zhdanov's report its formulations regarding the exclusion of the whole of the bourgeoisie from the people's democratic power, etc. Leave aside the fact that it has interpreted Zhdanov's formulation on people's democracy wrongly, but even to the extent it has adopted from Zhdanov has the least consideration been given to the above aspect—of distinguishing the distinctive features referred to above between people's democracy in colonial and dependent countries and the people's democracy in the East European countries?

No. On the other hand, when Mao has precisely taken these distinctive features into consideration and made his formulations on people's democracy, the polit bureau violently attacks them.

Hence, once again, the same old sin—discussed in the foregoing—continues to haunt the polit bureau, i.e. brushing aside the distinction between revolution in colonial and

dependent countries on the one hand and revolution in independent, capitalist, imperialist countries on the other.

When the polit bureau goes extremely wrong on very many basic questions, such as Zhdanov's report, Mountbatten award, the agrarian class analysis and the stage of the revolution, it is inevitable that it gives a wrong strategy also.

Let us first of all show how the Andhra secretariat *Draft Note* defines the strategy.

"Objective: to overthrow imperialist-bigbusiness-feudal combine and completely wipe out all the features of feudalism, medievalism and colonial impress. Main force of the revolution: workers both rural and industrial. Immediate reserves: peasantry in general with the exception of those rich farmers who are unable to shake off their tails of feudalism, and poor and middle peasants in particular remain as immediate reserves throughout this stage of new democratic revolution. Direction of the main blow: against the collaborationist bourgeoisie and its henchmen who have been duping the peasantry and are still trying to keep their grip on them, to betray the revolution. The proletariat must carry to completion the new democratic revolution by allying itself with the mass of peasants in general and poor and middle peasants in particular in order to crush by force the power of resistance of the imperialist-bigbusiness-feudal combine and paralyse the instability of the middle bourgeoisie, upper middle class and a section of the rich peasantry."

The polit bureau criticised and condemned all this as gross reformism.

The term 'neutralisation' used in this context by the Andhra secretariat is brushed aside as of no significance and equated with 'collaboration' and 'alliance' by the polit bureau. The argument goes thus: "No doubt, the documents talk generally of 'neutralisation', in respect of an enemy who has to be openly fought and routed—neutralisation becomes the banner of collaboration with the enemy" (*Tactical Line*).

Is this a correct position?

The term 'neutralisation' used by Lenin and Stalin in classics is not such as can be mechanically given a simple literary meaning fixed for all occasions. It has to be understood in its context of things, i.e. how it is used and in reference to what class and which stage, etc. The term 'paralyse the instability' or 'neutralise' is used by Lenin with regard to Russian bourgeoisie during the pre-February stage, in the sense of 'causing it to recoil from the revolution'. As the middle peasants' vacillations between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat in the struggle for power are great and considerable, the proletariat should set itself the task of fighting for neutralising this stratum and not allow the class enemy to placate it and use it against the revolutionary proletariat. Though the proletariat in its struggle for socialist revolution 'cannot set to the task of winning them over' to the side of the proletariat, the possibility of this stratum swinging over to the side of the proletarian revolution under certain circumstances is not ruled out. For example, while advancing to October socialist revolution, according to the strategy worked out by the Bolshevik Party, it contains only 'neutralisation' of the middle peasantry. But actually, on the eve of October, the middle peasantry swung over to the side of the revolution. Here is what Stalin says on it: "As to the middle peasants, whose vacillations had retarded the development of the revolution in the period from April to August 1917, after the rout of Kornilov, they definitely began to swing towards the Bolshevik Party, joining forces with the poor peasants."

"The existence of this alliance (between the working class and the poor peasantry) determined the conduct of the poor peasantry, determined the conduct of the middle peasants, who had long been vacillating and only on the eve of October uprising wholeheartedly swung over towards the revolution" (*History of the CPSU-B*).

What is it we want to drive at here? It is that the term 'neutralisation' used by the Andhra secretariat as regards

the middle bourgeoisie does not necessarily imply guaranteed alliance, though it neither precludes such possibility at some stage of the struggle nor dogmatically asserts that one should be prepared to commit categorically to such a possibility alone.

At the time of the provincial (Andhra) party conference (January 1948) an amendment "neutralising or winning over the middle bourgeoisie at a stage", etc. was moved to the draft political thesis, based on the December 1947 report of Mao to the central committee of the Communist Party of China. The amendment was accepted by the conference, excepting one or two delegates. Though it was passed by the provincial conference, the Andhra secretariat took up the position only of 'neutralisation' in its *Draft Note*, as it thought that was the correct position.

The documents of the polit bureau violently attacked this line. They characterised it as "an advocacy of alliance in one form or another with sections of the exploiting bourgeoisie", as an attempt "to tie down the working class to the apron-strings of the bourgeoisie", a "shamefaced apology to ally with some other sections of the bourgeoisie", "right-reformism in its crassest form" and an attempt to take the party back to the same Joshian line of pre-second-party congress etc.

When the Andhra secretariat cites the antifeudal role of the rich peasant with facts from the experience of Telangana, the polit bureau asserts, "The documents say that this has been proved in Telangana. In reality no such proof exists"! Indeed, a wonderful way of asserting against facts!

Thus the polit bureau comes out with a strategy supposed to be worked out in strict conformity with Marxism-Leninism; while the Andhra secretariat is alleged to have turned Marxism upside down and advanced a 'crassest' reformist line!

Not having satisfied itself with making a mockery of Marxism by violating every basic tenet of Marxism-

Leninism, the polit bureau goes on to invoke the names of Zhdanov and Kuusinen in this context also.

At another place in the document, *Tactical Line*, while attacking the Andhra secretariat for having quoted Mao—which it characterised as “Mao’s old outlook on new democracy”—the polit bureau deduced from Zhdanov’s report at the nine parties’ conference a conclusion which pits Zhdanov’s report against Mao’s formulation. It is stated thus: “A very precise class character of people’s democracy is given there—a characterisation which excludes the bourgeoisie from power. But all this does not find place in the document” (*Tactical Line*).

Is it correct to say that Zhdanov has said what the polit bureau ascribes in the above? Is it pardonable for such misinterpretation and distortions to be made in support of one’s own left-deviationist line?

The following quotation from Zhdanov’s report will lay bare the truth:

“In the course of struggle, the profascist elements, the collaborators with Hitler, the most influential of the big capitalists, large landowners, high officials and monarchist officers—were exposed as betrayers of the national interests. In the Danubian countries liberation from German fascist slavery was accompanied by the removal from power of the top bourgeoisie and landlords who had compromised with German fascism...” etc.

Is it not evident that what Zhdanov has pointed out is exclusion from power of the top bourgeoisie and landlords, etc., and not as our polit bureau says, the entire bourgeoisie, including the rich peasant?

Again as early as May 1949, C. Rajeswara Rao, in his people’s democratic state, Zhdanov says: “where a bloc of the labouring classes of the population, headed by the working class, constitutes the leading force.”

Thus, according to Zhdanov, “the bloc of labouring classes” is the “leading force” in the people’s democratic state. If one were to understand it as it ought to be, plain as it is, the term “leading force” implies that there are

other sections also in the people's democratic government. But for our polit bureau the term "leading force" mysteriously, perhaps conveniently, disappears and only the bloc of labouring classes to the exclusion of all the exploiting elements remains. The polit bureau substituted "the whole of the bourgeoisie" for Zhdanov's "top bourgeoisie"! What a small oversight!

We think it is impermissible to put in the mouth of Zhdanov the idea of total exclusion of the bourgeoisie as an entire class from the earlier stages of people's democratic government. It is neither factually correct nor historically true.

Starting from persons like Dr Benes and Masaryk in Czechoslovakia to Nagy and Co in Hungary, who were participants in the people's democratic governments still at the time of the nine parties' conference—were not all of them representatives of the bourgeoisie? It is needless to labour the point further.

Again as early as May 1949, C. Rajeswara Rao, in his letter to the polit bureau brings this point in particular to the notice of the polit bureau. The letter says: "While I was with you, it was only the Chinese documents which were making distinction between big business and small bourgeois sections. But, after I came here, a number of articles have been published in the organ of the Cominform bureau, *American Political Affairs*, the *New Times*, even our central organ... the interpretation we have given to Zhdanov's report on this point, is not in consonance with that of communist parties of several other countries and the Cominform."

Then the letter goes on to cite relevant extracts from eight Marxist sources on this point.

Here are the eight points which the letter gives:

"(1) *For a Lasting Peace, For A People's Democracy!* of 1 July 1948 publishes Mao's report where he makes such a distinction. Here is the relevant passage:

"The new democratic revolution can and must be no other revolution than the revolution of the great masses

of the people led by the proletariat, against imperialism, feudalism and bureaucratic capitalism. That is to say, that this revolution can have no other class and political party as the leader, but can only and must have the proletariat and Chinese Communist Party acting as the leader. That is to say, the united front made up of the people taking part in this revolution is very broad comprising of workers, peasants, independent labourers, professional people, intelligentsia, liberal bourgeoisie, and enlightened gentry split off from the landlord class... the enemies which this revolution is to overthrow are only and must be imperialism, feudalism and bureaucratic capitalism.'

"(2) *China Digest*, No 4, Vol 5, publishes an article by an important Chinese communist leader, Liu Shao-chi where he makes such a distinction not only for China but for all colonial and semicolonial countries and warns communist parties of these countries that it would be a mistake not to utilise it.

" 'Of course, in other colonial and semicolonial countries like India, Burma... it is likewise necessary for the communists in order to defend the interests of their own nations to adopt firm policies against the national betrayal of that section of bourgeois reactionaries (mainly big-bourgeois reactionaries) which has already capitulated to imperialism. Otherwise they would be mistaken. On the other hand, the communists should establish anti-imperialist cooperation with the national bourgeoisie who still oppose imperialism and do not oppose the anti-imperialist struggle of the masses of the people. Should the communists fail to establish this kind of cooperation in earnest, but on the contrary either oppose or refuse this kind of cooperation, that would also be an extremely great mistake. This cooperation must be established in earnest even though it be unreliable, temporary and vacillating.'

"(3) R. Palme Dutt's article in the organ of the Cominform bureau (numbers of 15 October and 1 November on 'Struggle of the Colonial People against Imperialism' speaks only of 'dominant sections of colonial bourgeoisie'

having moved from a previously vacillating partial oppositional role to a full counterrevolutionary role and bloc with imperialism. (1 November Cominform bureau organ).

"Though he is not positive like the Chinese comrades about 'cooperation' with another bourgeois section which is in opposition to imperialism, the thread of his article is the same thing. Otherwise there is no meaning in making such a distinction at all.

"(4) The general secretary of the Communist Party of Japan, an advanced industrial country, also speaks in the same strain: 'Conditions in Japan now favour building a broad people's front representing workers, farmers, middleclass groups and even small and medium industrialists' (PA, Vol VII, No 32, article on Japanese elections).

"(5) Member of the executive committee of Communist Party of Cuba speaks of the same thing for Latin-American colonies: "

" 'The Brazilian people have just scored an important victory in defeating the treasonable attempt of Director Dutra to surrender the national petroleum oil resources to Standard Oil. Wherever the proletariat has the maturity necessary to head the fight for national anti-imperialist unity, there we see developing an alliance of workers, peasants, the middle class and sections of the bourgeoisie.' (Political Affairs, December 1948).

"(6) In the same issue, the secretary of the American Communist Party, in his article on American elections, speaks of Wallace to be a progressive and says the 'Progressive Party will grow as a mass people's party, as a united front of antiwar and antimonopoly party'. Who is Wallace? Is he a petty bourgeois? No. He himself told he is a pure and simple businessman...

"(7) Last of all comes Dyakov's article on our country itself which says 'All this confirms the opinion of the democratic press that although the Congress leaders claim to represent all the peoples of India, actually they voice the interests of only the big bourgeoisie, chiefly of the



Gujarati and Marwari. These having made a deal with British imperialism and bowed to the bankers of Wall Street have no desire to share the market with the weaker bourgeoisie of the other Indian nationalities. Furthermore the formation of national provinces will necessarily imply the abolition of the feudal states. In the provinces, where the big bourgeoisie is weak, the predominant role in the local organs of government would be played by elements more democratic than the centre. But this would not be in the interests of the Indian bourgeoisie' (*New Times*, No 3 1949).

"(8) Prof. A. Schneerson writes in his article, 'The General Crisis of Capitalism is Becoming More Acute' which appeared in Tass (Delhi) daily bulletin, dated 5 January 1949, that,

'In the colonies themselves the various classes have taken up new different positions. In the major colonial and semicolonial countries the big native bourgeoisie, frightened by the future development of the democratic movement and the growth of the working class resulting from the industrial development, switched over to the camp of imperialism and ceased to play a revolutionary and progressive role in the colonies. The working class took over the banner of the national-liberation movement and the task of the rallying of the popular masses for the struggle against imperialism. Of course even today it would be incorrect to think that temporary agreements of the revolutionary forces with one or another stratum of the petty or middle bourgeoisie and in some colonies, at a definite stage, even with certain groups of big national bourgeoisie are precluded. But whatever the case, the radical demarcation of the class forces in the colonies today consists in that the working class is at the head of the national-liberation struggle.'

All this makes no impression on the polit bureau. It refuses to revise its own understanding. It doggedly sticks to its own guns. Mao's article, "Dictatorship of People's Democracy", even when published in the organ of the

Cominform bureau, fails to evoke any reaction on the part of the polit bureau. Even Liu Shao-chi's opening speech at the Peking conference, though published in the organ of Cominform bureau, leaves the polit bureau unruffled.

This dogmatic attitude of the polit bureau continues right up to the moment of the editorial article in the organ of Cominform bureau (27 January 1950) and, only after its appearance and the sharp correction it contains on the line of the Communist Party of India, does the polit bureau begin to think—though still on the wrong lines.

Let us see what the editorial of the organ of the Cominform bureau says:

"A sham independence was bestowed on India...the national independence and freedom of India."

Thus, we have two alternative lines—the line of the Cominform bureau and the line of the polit bureau.

Let us make a contrast of them.

(1) According to the Cominform bureau, in the sham independence of India the "interests of British imperialism remain 'sacred and inviolable'". But according to our polit bureau it is the collaborationist bourgeoisie that is able to "bargain hard" and "advance its class interests within the framework of the Mountbatten plan", against imperialism.

(2) According to the Cominform bureau, it is the Anglo-American imperialism that is the spearhead of the counter-revolutionary combine. But, according to the polit bureau, it is the national bourgeoisie.

(3) Who has collaborated with imperialism? According to the Cominform bureau, it is the "reactionary big bourgeoisie and feudal princes". But according to the polit bureau, no such distinction, big or small exists; it is the entire bourgeoisie, including the rich peasant.

(4) According to the Cominform bureau, the working class must ally with "all the peasantry", i.e. including the rich peasant. But according to the polit bureau, rich peasant is the "spearhead of counterrevolution in the countryside" and is to be "fought and routed".

(5) Who is the vacillating ally? According to the line of the Cominform bureau—as the polit bureau itself now interprets it—it is the middle bourgeoisie. But according to the polit bureau line—in its documents—it is the middle peasant.

Thus we see that the strategy advanced by our polit bureau has nothing in common with Marxism-Leninism and its concrete application to the conditions of India.

Is it not clear that if anything is near to the line of the Cominform bureau, it is the line advanced by the Andhra secretariat in its *Draft Note*, which has been characterised by the polit bureau as grossly reformist? The truth is, not that the line of the Andhra secretariat is gross reformism, but that the strategical line advanced by the polit bureau is crude leftism and sectarianism.

Such are the facts.

Is it not audacious on the part of the polit bureau to characterise its blunders, even as late as February 1950, in its latest document (for all party members), and to try to explain away its Himalayan blunders as "lagging behind" in actual achievements, and a small slip that occurred "in combating reformism" etc.? Is it conceivable that with such a crude sectarian line one could combat reformism? In the particular context, what the polit bureau fought was not reformism, indeed, but the honest attempts of the Andhra secretariat to grapple with realities basing on Marxism-Leninism. Such is the real face of things.

How are we to account for these blunders of the polit bureau? To what are they to be traced?

Besides committing a series of blunders—such as the erroneous and mechanical interpretation of Zhdanov's formulations, the opportunist interpretation of the Mountbatten award, the clean bypassing of the national-liberationist character of the Indian revolution and the pseudo-class analysis it made—besides these, the main link for this blundering is to be found in and traced to the signal failure to distinguish between the revolution in colonial

and semicolonial countries and those of independent, capitalist, imperialist countries. From this naturally follows the mechanical deduction of the class roles.

Let us quote an illuminating passage from Stalin which drives home the point.

"The fundamental mistake of the opposition (i.e. the trotskyite-zinovievite opposition) is that they do not understand and will not admit this difference between the one type of revolution and the other type of revolution.

"The fundamental mistake of the opposition is that they identify the 1905 revolution in Russia, an imperialist country, which oppressed other peoples, with the revolution in China, an oppressed country, a semicolonial country, which is forced to resist the imperialist oppression of other states.

"With us in Russia in 1905, the revolution was directed against the bourgeoisie, against the liberal bourgeoisie, in spite of the fact that it was a bourgeois-democratic revolution. Why? Because the liberal bourgeoisie of an imperialist country is bound to be counterrevolutionary. And that is why the bolsheviks at that time did not and could not consider temporary blocs and agreements with the liberal bourgeoisie. On these grounds the opposition assert that the same attitude should be adopted in China in all stages of revolutionary movement, and that temporary agreements and blocs with national bourgeoisie in China are impermissible at all times and under all circumstances. But the opposition forget that only people who do not understand and will not admit that there is a difference between revolution in oppressed countries and revolution in oppressor countries can talk like this, that only people who are forsaking Leninism and joining the followers of the Second International can talk like this.

"This is what Lenin said as to the permissibility of temporary agreements and blocs with bourgeois-liberation movement in colonial countries:

"The Communist International must join in a temporary alliance with the bourgeois-democrats of the colonies

and backward countries, but not merge with them, and must unconditionally preserve the independence of the proletarian movement even if it is in a quite incipient form' ("Preliminary Draft Theses on the National and the Colonial Questions").

"...we, as communists, should and will support the bourgeois-liberation movements in the colonial countries only when these movements are truly revolutionary, movements, and when their representatives will not hamper us in educating and organising the peasantry and the masses of the exploited in the revolutionary spirit' ("Report of the Commission on the National and the Colonial Questions").

"How does it 'happen' that Lenin, who fulminated against agreements with the bourgeoisie in Russia regarded such agreements and blocs as permissible in China? Perhaps Lenin made a mistake? Perhaps he turned from revolutionary tactics to opportunist tactics? Of course not. It 'happened' because Lenin understood the difference between revolution in an oppressed country and revolution in an oppressor country. It 'happened' because Lenin understood that at a certain stage of its development the national bourgeoisie in the colonial countries may support the revolutionary movement of its country against foreign imperialism. This is what the opposition do not want to understand; and they do not want to understand it because they are breaking with the revolutionary tactics of Lenin, because they are breaking with the revolutionary tactics of Leninism.

'Have you observed how carefully the leaders of the opposition in their speeches evaded these directions of Lenin's, how they feared to refer to them in spite of the fact that Bukharin in his report bluntly confronted them with these directions of Lenin's? Why then do they evade these wellknown directions given by Lenin on tactics in relation to the colonial and dependent countries? Why do they fear these directions? Because they fear the truth. Because Lenin's directions on tactics refute the whole

ideological and political position of trotskyism on the problems of the Chinese revolution." ("China", *Marxism and the National and Colonial Question*).

Further Stalin says, in his "Address to the students of the University of the Toilers of the East", referring to the tasks of the Communist Party of India:

"But the communist party can and must enter into an open bloc with the revolutionary wing of the bourgeoisie in order, after having isolated the compromising national bourgeoisie, to lead the vast masses of the urban and rural petty bourgeoisie in the fight against imperialism."

What does Stalin mean by the revolutionary wing of the bourgeoisie here? Evidently he is discussing this point in connecton with the compromising Indian big bourgeoisie and its collaboration with imperialism. This analysis of Stalin's, made as early as 1925, still holds good in its basic essentials. Of course after this analysis a great many changes have taken place, i.e. the rise of fascism and the consequent changes in the strategy, tactics of Communist International, which are expressed through the resolutions of the seventh congress of the Communist International, etc. If till now the Indian big bourgeoisie, in spite of a whole chain of betrayals and capitulation before imperialism (every time the mass movement rose to a pitch when it threatened to go out of its control and endanger its narrow class interests—as during 1918-22, during 1930-32, etc.), represented some opposition to imperialism, then at the present time it has completely and openly gone over to imperialism and its collaboration is final, with the acceptance of the Mountbatten award. The "revolutionary wing of the bourgeoisie" of whom Stalin was speaking then is evidently the middle bourgeoisie about whom the Soviet and Chinese writers speak of today.

Yet, the pity is, our polit bureau even as late as February 1950 publishes this speech of Stalin with a misleading introductory note, as though in justification of its sectarian line but clean misses to spotlight the above passage that has a direct bearing on our strategy today. Mind you,

this is after the Peking conference of trade unions of Asian and Australian countries is held and after the appearance of Liu Shao-chi's opening speech therein and of the summary of the manifesto published in the organ of the Cominform bureau, which in their nature are more than enough to make the polit bureau rethink seriously on these issues.

#### IV. AGRARIAN QUESTION

Thus we see the signal failure of the polit bureau even to utilise the international documents. It cannot be otherwise when one is sunk neck-deep in left-deviation.

The document on the agrarian question by the polit bureau is one that by its nature constitutes one of the most important documents. Its importance lies in two ways. Firstly, the peasant question is a vital question for the proletariat in its struggle for power. Not only that. In the specific case of India, because of its colonial and semi-colonial character, its importance is all the greater and in certain respects it becomes the main question. The correctness or otherwise of the analysis on the agrarian question has a profound bearing on the entire course of our revolution. Secondly, the importance of a critical examination of this document becomes all the more significant in view of the fundamental departures it makes both from the position of the political theses and the documents of the Communist International.

The document of the polit bureau, *On the Agrarian Question in India*, starts with a basic departure from the analysis made in the political theses, which is based on the analysis of the colonial theses of the sixth congress of the Communist International.

What does its supposed "fundamental reestimate" boil down to?

It is this: the theses of the Communist International twenty years ago sharply emphasised that precapitalist and feudal forms of exploitation and relations on land are

dominant, though capitalist relations are steadily growing. But now, after 20 years of mighty changes, it is the other way about. The capitalist relations have become dominant, though feudal exploitation in varied forms "still exists"!

Thus at one stroke the polit bureau attempts to revise the world Marxist understanding on the colonial-agrarian question.

What is the understanding given by the Communist International? It states in clear and unambiguous terms that as long as imperialists keep the colonies "as markets for their commodities, as sources of raw material and as spheres for the export of capital", the basic structure of colonial agrarian economy, i.e. "feudal and precapitalist forms of domination", will not change.

Further it emphasises the fact that despite "the carrying through of the minimum constructive activity (railways, harbours, etc.)", the "peasant economy is thereby by no means liberated from the oppression of its pre-capitalist features", and that "in final analysis, (all this) leads to an artificial retardation of the development of the productive forces in the colonies".

The polit bureau, by advancing arguments all and sundry, attempts at a basic revision of this world Marxist understanding by asserting that capitalist relations have become dominant instead of precapitalist relations!

What does this revision amount to?

It knowingly or unknowingly provides material for the discredited theory of 'decolonisation'.

While showing the statistical figures of the growth of the agricultural labour class, the question "What is the significance of the rise of the agricultural workers?" is posed and answered.

This supposed "fundamental analysis of the peasant problem after that made in the colonial theses of the sixth congress of the Communist International" and the consequent political conclusions drawn from it have not only not enriched the formulations of Communist International, but on the contrary have miserably failed to grasp the



basic lines of the Communist International formulations and made counterformulations of the trotskyist type. This revision has also led to wrong formulations of strategy and tactics.

First of all let us see what the theses of the Communist International have said on the peasant question in colonies and semicolonies, the development of capitalist relations in agriculture, and prevailing feudal forms, etc., and thus find out the real difference between Communist International and our polit bureau on the issue.

The theses say:

"Capitalism, which has included the colonial village into its system of taxation and trade apparatus, and which has overturned precapitalist relations (for instance, the destruction of the village commune), does not thereby liberate peasants from the yoke of precapitalist forms of bondage and exploitation, but only gives the latter a monetary expression (feudal services and rent in kind are partially replaced by money rent, while payment of taxes in kind is replaced by money taxes, and so on), which still more increase the suffering of the peasantry."

"Agriculture in the colonies is compelled to a considerable degree to work for export, but peasant economy is by no means liberated from the oppression of its precapitalist features. As a general rule, it is converted to a 'free' trading economy by means of the subordination of the precapitalist forms of production to the needs of the finance capital, the deepening of the precapitalist methods of exploitation, through subjection of the peasant economy to the yoke of rapidly developing trade and usury capital, the increase of tax burdens, etc."

Thus the Communist International analyses the penetration of capitalist relations into the countryside of colonies and semicolonies and its effects.

Then is it not absolutely incorrect to say that the Communist International theses say only "feudal relations as dominant" and "also took note of the fact the situation would not be always so rigid and changes might take

place", etc. thereby slyly suggesting that the Communist International had not taken into full consideration the growth of capitalist penetration and its effects? Is it not also incorrect to say that the Communist International expected that "situation would not be always so rigid and changes might take place", etc. and from there to deduce that the basic formulations of the Communist International on the agrarian question in the colonies have altered in spite of the fact that the colonial and semicolonial setup continues to exist? The theses of the Communist International quite clearly and correctly saw the factor of penetration of capitalism into the colonial village and also drew proper conclusions from it. Whatever changes have taken place subsequent to the theses of the Communist International are not of such a character as to alter the basic formulations made in it as long as our country remains a colony and semicolony.

The theses of the Communist International also very clearly pointed out the process of class differentiation of the peasantry. Here is what they say:

"The process of class differentiation of the peasantry in the colonies and semicolonies which possess important relics of feudalism and precapitalist relationships, proceeds at a comparatively slow rate. Nevertheless market relationships in these countries have developed to such a degree that the peasantry no longer represent a homogeneous mass, as far as their class relations are concerned. In the villages of China and India, in particular certain parts of these countries, it is already possible to find exploiting elements derived from the peasantry, who exploit the peasants and village labourers through usury, trade, employment of hired labour, the sale or letting out of land on rent, the loaning of cattle or agricultural implements, etc."

Again, to show the growth of the agricultural labour class, the theses of the Communist International state thus:

"In India, China and Indonesia, the pauperisation of the

peasantry has reached such a height that at the present time, the most characteristic figure in the village is the poor peasant, almost or entirely deprived of land and not infrequently suffering starvation."

"The many millions of starving *ténant*-cultivators, petty peasants oppressed by want and groaning under all kinds of precapitalist and capitalist forms of exploitation, a considerable portion of them deprived of the possibility of cultivation on the lands that they rent, thrown out from the process of production and slowly dying from famine and disease, village agricultural labourers—all these are the allies of the proletariat in the village."

Emphasising the urgent task of the Communist Party of India to organise agricultural labour and cautioning to be vigilant not to allow the newly-organised peasant unions to fall under the leadership of exploiting strata in the village, the theses say:

"The miners and engineering workers, the coolies working on the plantations and agricultural labourers in general, represent the least organised sections of the Indian proletariat and the communists need to devote the necessary attention to them."

"It is essential to pay particular attention to make sure that the newly-created peasant organisations do not fall under the influence of the exploiting strata in the village."

In this connection, we would like to point out that the huge growth of agricultural proletariat in our country is noticed even by bourgeois economists like Radhakamal Mukerjee. In his book on Indian agriculture he gives the figures of agricultural labour as 40 to 50 per cent of the rural population as early as in 1930 (theses of the Communist International came out in 1928). It is we the members and leaders of the Communist Party of India who had woefully failed to grasp the analysis of this growth made by the Communist International and ignored, neglected and refused to organise the agricultural labour, except in one province, i.e. Andhra, in spite of a number of reformist mistakes there also. Now after the second

party congress, in November-December 1948, we wake up like Rip Van Winkle and see the growth of agricultural labour class; but we do so not to arrive at correct conclusions but with an audacity to revise the basic formulations of the theses of the Communist International, only to argue "that the theses of the Communist International saw the precapitalist and feudal relations dominant" and, we discover that capitalist relations are dominant though feudal and precapitalist relations "still exist"!

Is this not another thrust into the colonial theses of the Communist International with the dagger of the infamous 'decolonisation thesis'?

When one attempts to analyse the present colonial countryside of ours from the Marxian point of view, it will be naive and stupid to try to find out whether the "classical feudal setup" is there or not. As a matter of fact, the 'classical' form will not be found in the greater part of the earth today, when every inch of the land on the surface of the globe has been brought under the iron rule of monopoly capitalism and modern imperialism. All that can be said is, as the theses of the Communist International state, that colonies and semicolonies—where democratic revolution has not yet been carried out and where no *decisive* agrarian reforms can be carried out by the imperialists and collaborationist bourgeoisie put together, in this phase of world capitalism in decay—"possess important relics of feudalism and precapitalist relationships". It is from this aspect that the question of "antifeudal" revolution or "agrarian revolution" or in the broad sense the "democratic revolution" comes on the agenda before the proletariat and its party, in its struggle to advance to the dictatorship of the proletariat and socialism. Instead of understanding this position, it is foolish on our part to put the abstract mechanical question "whether feudal relations dominate or capitalist relations dominate in our countryside" and only to eclectically deduce from it that "capitalist relations dominate", and then to proceed that the present stage of our struggle is "mainly anticapitalist",

"though, of course, the still persisting feudal forms" need also to be liquidated, etc. Thus the "colonial liberation" aspect, the "agrarian revolution" aspect, the aspect of liquidation of all feudal and precapitalist forms, get brushed aside as of "minor" importance or of no importance in certain respects. And then, finally, we land into masterly confusion on the present stage of our revolution saying that it is a "mixed" one, "delayed democratic revolution ripening into socialist revolution", that the "two stages, democratic and socialist, get mixed into one people's democratic revolution", etc., distorting the rich Leninist idea of "democratic revolution passing into socialist revolution" in support of such vulgarisation.

With these confused and wrong ideas one begins attacking all the clearheaded Marxist thinkers on the problem, starting right from Mao and the Communist Party of China down to any member of the central committee or any party member of our party who raised discussion on this issue.

To understand precisely what precapitalist or feudal relations mean, it will be good to refer to Lenin.

"Let us, however, finish what we have to say about the bourgeois-democratic content of our revolution. Marxists must understand what this means. To explain, we shall quote a few graphic examples.

"The bourgeois-democratic content of the revolution means that the social relations (systems and institution) of the country are purged of medievalism, serfdom, feudalism.

"What are the chief manifestations, survivals, remnants of serfdom in Russia up to 1917? The monarchy, the caste system, private landownership and land tenure, the inferior status of women, religion and national oppression. Take any one of these 'Augean stables', which, incidentally, were left largely uncleansed by all the more advanced states when they accomplished *their* bourgeois-democratic revolutions one hundred and twenty-five, two hundred and fifty and more years ago (1649 in England); take any of

these Augean stables, and you will see that we have cleansed them thoroughly" ("Fourth Anniversary of the October Revolution").

Have not precisely the abovenarrated precapitalist and feudal forms been pointed out by the theses of the Communist International as present in our colonial and semi-colonial countries? Do not the expressions in the colonial theses and the programme of the Communist International such as "in the colonies and semicolonies which possess important relics of feudalism and precapitalist relationships" and "with feudal medieval relationships," or "Asiatic mode of production" relationships prevailing in their economies and in their political superstructures etc. mean that they are *dominant* in the absolute sense of the term? Is it not wrong to interpret these changing relationships in the rural side as development of capitalist relations without understanding the significance of the formulations of the Communist International? Do the economic changes of the last twenty years expressed in terms of class relations in our rural setup, i.e. the growth in the number of the agricultural labour and rich peasants, etc., warrant on our part, in the name of "new" and "fundamental analysis", statements to the effect that the present rural setup "shows a reversal of old relations", in contrast to the theses of the Communist International?

We are of the opinion that the analysis made by the polit bureau, in the name of discovering capitalist relations growing predominant, etc. is nothing but underestimating the significance of the antifeudal struggle and of the agrarian revolution as the "axis of the colonial revolution".

The subsequent formulations in the document of the polit bureau *On the Agrarian Question*—such as "the development of capitalist relations does not as yet mean that feudalism is dead", "the rise of new capitalist methods of exploitation has only added to the exploitation without abolishing old burdens", "at the same time (we must) see the tenacity of feudal relations, which though they are disintegrating, yet continue to exist and oppress the

majority of the people" and "that feudal relations are still tenaciously persisting and they are still strong", etc.—are formal and only form a background music without any correct bearing on the main conclusions drawn from the previous "new" "fundamental analysis".

This can be seen from the other statements made in the document itself such as: "To conclude, feudalism is not dead despite development of capitalist relations" and "the main point however to understand is, that the capitalist relations have developed inside the feudal framework, that they are developing with great speed and that in future they will develop with still greater rapidity", etc.

To say that feudalism is not *yet* 'dead', that capitalist relations are "developing with great speed", and will "develop with still greater rapidity", etc. is in reality failing to grasp the significance of feudal and precapitalist barriers in our country for social progress and advancement; it is to give a clean alibi to those who argue on the basis of 'decolonisation' thesis that imperialism in the course of its own development completes the tasks of democratic revolution in colonies; and failure to understand that in the present period of final decay of world capitalism such development "with great speed" and "still greater rapidity" is sheer nonsense. It is an overestimation of the strength and potentiality of the present collaborationist setup; and underestimation of the significance of imperialist-feudal stranglehold on the country's economy today; and, as its counterpart and logical conclusion, follows the reformist political conclusion that the "national government" under Mountbatten award is a "step in advance". It is basing on such wrong logic that the polit bureau argues that though "August 15 independence" is not independence for the people of India, it is "independence" for the entire bourgeoisie of India for "unlimited exploitation" and expansion.

The collaborationist bourgeoisie is incapable only of "revolutionary liquidation of feudalism"; it is capable of "compelling" feudalism to "reform" itself, to suit its own

advantage; it will "curb feudalism to suit its own interests"!

How wonderfully does the polit bureau fight reformism with such "Marxism" as this!

In world history, except in the French bourgeois-democratic revolution, nowhere was there revolutionary liquidation of feudalism by the bourgeoisie; English bourgeoisie had compromised with feudalism in one measure or other. German bourgeoisie had compromised with feudal junker landlord gang. These compromises were not in the declining period of world capitalism. They were done even in the heyday of world capitalism. When we say the bourgeoisie of our times, or, more precisely, the colonial and collaborationist bourgeoisie, "compromises with feudalism or strengthens it", the only "Marxist meaning" is "not simply" that the bourgeoisie by its very class nature is "not consistently revolutionary". It means something more in the presentday world and in our semicolonial country in particular. Here is what the theses of the Communist International say on it:

"The poverty-stricken position of the peasantry denotes at the same time a crisis in the internal market for industry, which in its turn represents a powerful obstacle to the capitalist development of the country. Not only the national bourgeoisie of India, China, Egypt, etc., but also imperialism itself was sensible of this peasant misery as an obstacle in the path of expansion of their exploitation; but the economic and political interests of both of them are so closely bound up with large ownership, as also with trading and usury capital in village, that they are not in a position to carry through an agrarian reform of any wide significance."

"But just here is the weakest point of the colonial bourgeoisie. The unbearable exploitation of the colonial peasantry can only be put an end to by the way of agrarian revolution. The bourgeoisie of China, India and Egypt is by its immediate interests, so closely bound up with landlordism, with usury capital and with the exploitation of



the peasant masses in general, that it takes its stand not only against the agrarian revolution but also against every decisive agrarian reform. It is afraid, and not without foundation, that even the more open formulation of the agrarian question will stimulate and accelerate the growth of the process of revolutionary fermentation in the peasant masses. Thus the reformist bourgeoisie hardly dares to decide to approach practically the basic urgent question."

Thus, whereas the theses of the Communist International observe "powerful obstacles to the capitalist development" and "as an obstacle in the path of the expansion of their (bourgeois—ANDHRA SECRETARIAT) exploitation", the documents of the polit bureau discover capitalism as "developing with great speed" and as "developing with still greater rapidity" in future in the rural economy!

While the theses of the Communist International state that the Indian bourgeoisie is "not in a position to carry through an agrarian reform of any wide significance", that it is "against even the mere open formulation of the agrarian question", that it "hardly dare" to decide to approach practically this basic urgent question, and that it is "just here (that is seen—ANDHRA SECRETARIAT) the weakest point of the colonial bourgeoisie", the document of the polit bureau says that the collaborationist Indian bourgeoisie will be able to "curb feudalism to suit its own interests" and "compel feudalism to reform to its own advantage".

The theses of the Communist International observe "the pitiful attempts (of the bourgeoisie—ANDHRA SECRETARIAT) at carrying through of agrarian reforms without endangering the colonial regime", but our polit bureau finds bountiful agrarian reforms by the bourgeoisie that "emancipates the bourgeoisie, clears the way for the development of bourgeois relations to the extent necessary".

The theses of the Communist International state that the Indian bourgeoisie "is by its immediate interests, so closely bound up with landlordism, with usury capital", that the "economic and political interests of both (impe-

rialism and national bourgeoisie—ANDHRA SECRETARIAT) of them are so closely bound up with large ownership, as also with trading and usury capital in the village". The polit bureau calls this understanding as "wrong and mechanical understanding" on the ground that it "sees no contradiction between them and reduces the content of alliance to one of complete identity of economic interests". The theses of the Communist International emphasise the compromising nature of national bourgeoisie with feudal landowners for obvious reasons, but our polit bureau emphasises the contradictions between them as of great significance; and not only that, not to do this is silly according to the polit bureau!

Who is silly? the polit bureau or the Communist International and those that follow the teachings of the Communist International?

Thus the polit bureau, in its attempt at the "fundamental reestimate of the class relations in agrarian areas", revises the basic formulations of the Communist International, despite all its avowals of loyalty to the latter. It is not a question of slightly going right or left; the position of the polit bureau has nothing in common with, and is a complete repudiation of, the understanding given by the Communist International.

From the abovestated position the polit bureau proceeds to evaluate the prospective land legislation of the Congress bourgeois governments in power. These bills are characterised thus: "The bourgeois programme bears a strange resemblance to the programme of the tsarist minister, Stolypin" (*On the Agrarian Question*).

Here we do not set ourselves the task of analysing these so-called "land reform bills" of the Congress government though we realise the importance of the task of such penetrating analysis to expose and fight them in the concrete.

Our main contention for the present is that the so-called land bills, whether they have a "strange resemblance" to the Stolypin reforms or to the Kuomintang government's pompous announcements of agrarian reform, are basically

only "empty nationalist phrases and gestures to keep the petty-bourgeois (peasants in particular) masses under its influence". The open and consistent opposition of the central government even to the many proposed "land reforms" of the provincial governments, which by themselves are in reality only "landlord bills" of the worst reactionary type, is a pointer in this respect to understand the real attitude of the collaborationist bourgeoisie to agrarian reforms of any significance. The proposed "zamindari abolition bills" are already pigeonholed to a great extent and it would be a matter of time before they are thrown completely into the dustbins of the government secretariat's office, on the plea of government's inability to pay the proposed "compensation" amounting to hundreds of millions of rupees to the zamindars and the landlords.

The report of the agrarian inquiry committee, under the presidency of Kumarappa with his Gandhian fads, is itself being opposed by all the bourgeois press as "utopian", "unpractical" and "dangerous" too. The landlord representatives like Omandur Ramaswami Reddiar, the expremier of Madras, and N. G. Ranga, the president of the Andhra Provincial Congress Committee, have already come out openly in the press against the Kumarappa report attacking it tooth and nail. In fact these are the tendencies and the standpoint of the present collaborationist bourgeoisie on the "agrarian reforms" which are too often talked of and announced in the bourgeois press only to counteract the growing agrarian unrest in the country.

As far as the Madras government is concerned, the proposed "zamindari abolition bill", which is wholeheartedly supported even by the zamindari clique itself, is only a measure that is mainly intended to save the zamindars, who encounter agrarian revolts every day, who miserably fail to collect the taxes on land, facing the bitter resistance from the peasants, and who run bankrupt and fail to pay peshkush to the government.

If such is the reality, neither "phrasemongering and negative attitude which contents itself with saying that no

change had been brought", etc., nor the great expectations that the bourgeoisie by hook or crook will be able to "compel feudalism to reform to its own advantage", "will curb feudalism to suit its own interests" and that "this process only emancipates the bourgeoisie, clears the way for the bourgeois relations to the extent necessary", etc., will get us anywhere near the truth. The one is abstract denunciation and failure to expose the collaborationist bourgeoisie and its demagoguery in concrete to the peasant masses; the other is overestimation of the contradictions between the collaborationist bourgeoisie and the feudal, semifeudal, precapitalist interests, and failure to understand the weakness of the colonial bourgeoisie particularly in this phase of decaying capitalism all the world over, thus running into reformist conclusions.

It is appropriate to quote here Stalin's observation regarding China. "In China", Stalin says, "there is not yet any group or government capable of carrying out reforms similar to Stolypin's which will serve as a lightning conductor for the ruling group" ("On Current Affairs: On China").

The estimation and evaluation by the polit bureau of the much-advertised "agrarian reform" is wrong, and mainly based on the "pious wishes" and pompous bills of the Congress bourgeoisie rather than on the real objective realities as such.

#### *Re: Rich Peasant*

Now let us proceed to discuss the question of the rich peasant.

First of all, rich peasant is placed by the polit bureau in the counterrevolutionary camp on the plea that the entire bourgeoisie has collaborated with imperialism, and the rich peasant, i.e. the peasant bourgeoisie, is also included in it.

Secondly, the polit bureau denies the antifeudal role of

the rich peasant in democratic and agrarian revolution as absurd and meaningless.

Thirdly, the rich peasant is described as "the spearhead of counterrevolution in the rural side".

Fourthly, the polit bureau rejects the necessity of making distinction between the landlord and the rich peasant, and takes up cudgels against those that make such a distinction.

Lastly, while the political thesis left a loophole by containing the slogan of khas lands of the rich peasant, the polit bureau in line with its whole bankrupt analysis advanced to the logical end along the wrong path and put forward the slogan of confiscation of the land of the rich peasants along with that of the landlord.

Let us elaborate these points, one by one.

(1) The polit bureau arrived at the role of the rich peasant in the people's democratic revolution in India, rather in a wonderfully ingenious way from Zhdanov's report. Zhdanov's report was supposed to mean, according to the polit bureau, that in the present international situation, nowhere in the world, in no country, at no stage of the revolution, can any section of the bourgeoisie including the rich peasant find a place in the revolutionary and democratic camp. Basing itself on this—its own—misinterpretation, it works up the following arguments—each outbeating the other in demagogy: How can rich peasants, even in feudal areas, really play an antifeudal role when the entire bourgeoisie wants to compromise and enter into an alliance against the masses; when their leader the industrial bourgeoisie has signed a new alliance with feudalism and when consistently fighting against the feudal elements creates danger for the rich peasants also at the hands of the masses? How can all this happen when the class antagonism between the exploiters and the exploited has reached such higher proportions?

Is it not amazing that such arguments flow from the pen of the polit bureau?

The statement that the entire bourgeoisie has collaborat-

ed, and hence this means the collaboration of the rich peasant, as peasant bourgeois, also is more an arbitrary assertion rather than an objective analysis.

The question is asked, how can the rich peasant go against his leader, the industrial bourgeoisie? The "leadership" in this case does not come so easily as our polit bureau thinks. The antifeudal and anti-imperialist interests of the rich peasant are not fulfilled by the supposed leader, with his collaboration with feudalism and imperialism. Hence for a while, during certain stage, the proletariat can lead him and become the leader, unless it refuses to lead him in the revolution and makes a present of him to the reactionary combine.

Why has the polit bureau introduced the idea of "consistently fighting against feudal elements"? Has anybody ever said that the rich peasant would "consistently" fight the feudal elements? Does it mean that the polit bureau is laying a dictum that the proletariat should ally itself with only those classes and sections that "consistently" fight along with it? Is it not a fact that in the era of imperialism, the proletariat in its struggle for power at different stages and in different countries has to ally itself with different classes and sections, some of whom are undoubtedly inconsistent by their very class nature?

To speak of "consistency" or otherwise without reference to stage and tasks has nothing to do with Marxism.

It is against such left phrasemongering that Lenin delivers a stern admonition and lays down the following pregnant dictum:

"The more powerful enemy can be conquered only by exerting the utmost effort, and by necessarily, thoroughly, carefully, attentively and skilfully, taking advantage of every, even the smallest, 'rift' among the enemies, of every antagonism of interest among the bourgeoisie of the various countries and among the various groups of types of bourgeoisie within the various countries, and also by taking advantage of every, even the smallest, opportunity of

gaining a mass ally, even though this ally be temporary, vacillating, unstable, unreliable and conditional."

And: "Those who do not understand this do not understand even a particle of Marxism or of scientific, modern socialism in general" ("*Left-Wing*" *Communism*).

This abundantly rich enunciation is more than enough to drive the point home.

On top of it all, the polit bureau puts the question: "How can all this happen when the class antagonism between the exploiters and the exploited has reached such higher proportions?" What does it mean thereby? Is it not once again to bring in here its bankrupt understanding that in the presentday world only one contradiction, the contradiction between labour and capital, remains and that the rest of the contradictions lose all significance with regard to, and have no bearing on, the question of strategy and tactics, etc.—an understanding that runs like a red thread throughout the writings of the polit bureau?

The polit bureau also advances the arguments to prove that the oppositional and antifeudal role of the rich peasant in India is once for all finished.

Not a single one of the arguments and points made out by the polit bureau to place the rich peasant outside the democratic front, at this stage of the revolution, has anything to do with Marxism-Leninism. It is nothing but subjectivism and a shamefaced attempt at revision of all the accepted Marxist tenets on this question.

(2) *No Antifeudal Role?* When the Andhra secretariat, in its *Draft Note*, had cited from its own experience the revolutionary role of the rich peasant in the struggle against the nizam's feudal autocracy, the polit bureau offers its criticism.

It denies what is a reality and a fact. Secondly, it denies the very antifeudal character and role of the rich peasant. It is one thing if the polit bureau had said that we had failed to observe the principle of "March separately and

strike together" and that while allowing the rich peasant to remain in our camp, the task of keeping vigilant with regard to him, of exposing him, which had to be done simultaneously, had been ignored, etc. But it is quite another thing, when it summarily rejects the fact altogether, stating "The documents (Andhra documents) say that this has been proved in Telangana. In reality, no such proof exists."

So let us first examine whether the rich peasant's participation in the antinizam struggle is a fact or not.

The agrarian struggle in Telangana reached the stage of armed resistance as early as the beginning of 1946 itself, i.e. one and a half years before "August 15 independence", and two and a half years before the counterrevolutionary intervention of the Indian Union armies, which culminated in the complete collaboration of the Nehru government and the nizam. If in the fight against the nizam's autocracy and against the jagirdar, deshmuks and landlord zoolum and the heinous feudal exploiting methods, like begar, vetti, etc., the rich peasant was not interested in participating, we are at a loss to understand how the rich peasant was considered by Lenin and Stalin as an ally in the pre-February stage of the Russian revolution, when the strategic slogan was "dictatorship of workers and peasants"—including the rich peasantry! The point however is that the polit bureau merely wants to assert away a fact, i.e. the rich peasant's participation in the antinizam struggle, when in fact it was not only the rich peasant but the entire bourgeoisie in Hyderabad state also who were in opposition to the feudal nizam, in one measure or other, when the compromise between the nizam and the Indian government had not yet come off.

Is the rich peasant objectively interested in the struggle against feudalism? The polit bureau says "No".

The documents of the polit bureau, while on the one hand they rebuke those who "underestimate" the contradictions (contradictions between the collaborationist bourgeoisie and feudal and semifeudal elements!), "practically



equating the bourgeoisie to the feudal elements" on the other, jump to the other end and call the conflicts between the rich peasantry and feudalism as rich peasant's "critical attitude to feudalism" since he is "not averse to curb the power" of the feudal landlord; "especially if it could be done by others", as "just sympathy of rich peasants in partial struggle now and then and in initial stage—which is quite conceivable just as one factory owner may sometimes support financially the strikers of another factory".

With this comparison of the conflict between rich peasant and feudal landlordism with the factional struggle between different factory owners, the polit bureau has reached the height of its bankruptcy.

Stalin in his letter to Yan-sky and Pokrovsky explains the implications of the following formulations of Lenin, when both of them began to confuse the question of bolshevik strategy in the February and October stages of Russian revolution:

"It is therefore clear that our constructive work in the rural districts has now gone beyond the limits to which it was confined when everything was subordinated to the fundamental demand of the struggle for power.

"This constructive work passed through two main phases. In October 1917, we seized power *together with the peasantry as a whole*. This was a bourgeois revolution, in as much as the class war in rural districts had not yet developed," etc. ("Work in the Rural Districts").

"When we took power we relied on the support of the peasantry as a whole. At that time, the aim of all the peasants was identical—to fight the landlords" (Ibid).

Yan-sky and Pokrovsky, who failed to understand the "special conditions" and "complicated" combinations in the two stages of the Russian revolution, began to argue that the strategy remained one and the same in both the February and October revolutions. Stalin, while pinning down their mistakes, discussed the nature of the support, opposition, etc. of the rich peasantry in October revolution.

This is of immense use for the clarification of the issue in discussion.

"...and in as much as the October revolution did complete the bourgeois revolution, it was bound to meet with the sympathy of all the peasants. All that is undeniable... ("Letter to Yan-sky"). "When the peasantry as a whole was faced with the danger of the restoration of the power of the landlords, and when the peasantry as a whole was compelled to rally around the Soviet power in order to ensure the completion of bourgeois revolution and preserve the fruits of revolution" ("Party's Three Fundamental Slogans on Peasant Problem").

"That we took power with a *certain amount* of the support from the peasantry as a whole is quite true. But you forget to add a 'detail', namely, that the peasantry *as a whole* supported us in October and after, only *in so far* as we carried the bourgeois revolution to completion... Indeed, why did we succeed in securing the support of the peasantry as a whole in October and after October? Because we were in a position to carry the bourgeois revolution to completion" ("Slogan of Dictatorship of the Proletariat and Poor Peasantry").

Do not these formulations of Stalin indicate that the "rich peasantry" is also interested in the carrying out of the bourgeois-democratic tasks? We feel that the understanding of the polit bureau on this question is completely wrong.

The October revolution was a proletarian socialist revolution, in spite of the fact that it had to complete a lot of bourgeois-democratic tasks, in that its strategy aims at the overthrow of "entire capitalism including the rural rich, the kulaks and the profiteers". The rich peasant in the main was considered as one of the enemies to be overthrown politically and as such it was meaningless to talk of his position in the strategical alliance of the proletariat in that stage. That is why Stalin argued thus: "Does not the achievement of the dictatorship of the proletariat mean going beyond the framework of bourgeois revolution? How

can you assert that the kulaks (who of course are also peasants) could support the overthrow of the bourgeoisie and the transfer of power to the proletariat? How can you deny that the decree of nationalisation of the land, abolition of private property in land, the prohibition of the purchase and sale of land, etc. in spite of the fact that it cannot be regarded as a socialist decree, was put into effect by us in the midst of *struggle against* the kulaks, and not in alliance with them? How can you assert that the kulaks (who are also peasants) could support the decrees of the Soviet government on the expropriation of mills, factories, railways, banks, etc., or the slogan of the proletariat in transforming the imperialist war into civil war? How can you assert that the *fundamental* thing in October was not these and similar acts, not the overthrow of the bourgeoisie and the establishment of dictatorship of the proletariat, but the completion of bourgeois revolution" ("Party's Three Fundamental Slogans" etc.).

If the fundamental thing in the present revolution for India also is the establishment of the proletarian dictatorship and completion of the bourgeois-democratic revolution is only "one of the main tasks" as in October Russian revolution, then the strategy is clear and the place of the rich peasant is no longer a complicated question for us. But as the Andhra secretariat understood while writing its draft in discussion now, the fundamental thing in our revolution is the completion of the bourgeois-democratic revolution, though as Lenin said the "individual particular elements of the one revolution and the other become interwoven", i.e. in our specific case confiscation of the concerns owned by the imperialists and nationalisation of key industries, etc. would definitely overstep the bounds of the democratic revolution and "will grow into proletarian revolution". The aspect of national liberation and the "aspect of the antifeudal and antilandlord struggle" are not considered simply as "byproducts" of our present revolution. Undoubtedly our revolution is basically democratic. The documents of the polit bureau instead of understand-

ing the real issue in discussion, summarily dispose of the point as "reformist" and "collaborationist", etc.

We are prompted to ask a question. Why was the Russian rich peasant interested in the bourgeois-democratic revolution and its general tasks even after the Stolypin reforms (incidentally it is to be noted that it was after the Stolypin reforms that the rich peasants, in Russia could be our ally in the February revolution and lend a "certain amount" of support in the October revolution also), whereas the present land bills of the Congress governments which are said to bear "strange resemblance to Stolypin reforms" are considered by our polit bureau to be such as would "emancipate" the rich peasant from feudal and landlord fetters? Is there anything special in our country which makes the rich peasant an ally of feudal-landlord reaction? Is it not evident from all the above that the rich peasant is objectively interested in the antifeudal revolution?

At the meeting of the central committee of Hungarian Workers' Party held on 5 and 6 March, Rakosi, the general secretary of the party, made the following observations: "Rakosi noted that the Hungarian Communist Party had followed the Lenin-Stalin teaching: after the liberation of the country, the party together with the peasantry, including the kulak, fought against the feudal landowners. But once this task was completed, the kulaks turned against the communists" (*For a Lasting Peace, For a People's Democracy*, 15 March 1949).

This was possible under the people's democratic republic in which, according to the polit bureau, there was no place for the "bourgeoisie" at any stage and in a country like Hungary, which was described in the programme of the Communist International as a "medium developed capitalist one", where "numerous survivals of semifeudal relationships in agriculture", etc. exist. Then, why in our country, which is semicolonial, with feudal medieval relationships or "Asiatic mode of production relationships prevailing", does the polit bureau dismiss the fact of the rich

peasant's participation even in the antifeudal struggle against the nizam's autocracy as a lie, saying "in reality no such proof exists"? Does the polit bureau proceed on the basis of actual class relations in our countryside or of the imaginary and clumsy theoretical analysis of its own?

Then again the colonial theses of the sixth congress of the Communist International state the following:

"In general, it is possible that, in the first period of the struggle of the peasantry against the landlords, the proletariat may be able to carry with it the entire peasantry" (including the rich peasantry—*Andhra secretariat*).

Has the polit bureau taken serious note of this passage at all? Does the polit bureau think that the "first period" of struggle against the landlords is already completed in our country, while in fact not even a countrywide beginning of it has been made? For the polit bureau, not only to have failed to take note of the antifeudal role of the rich peasant, but also go to the extent of totally denying this classical concept—is it not a crime of the highest magnitude?

(3) *Rich Peasant, Spearhead of Reaction?* Not satisfied with having put the rich peasant outside the democratic front, with having denied him any antifeudal and anti-imperialist role, the polit bureau goes further and makes him the spearhead of reaction in the countryside. Here is what the polit bureau says: "In all this, where does the rich peasant, peasant bourgeoisie stand? Does he vacillate? Can he be neutralised? No. He is one of the main enemies in the rural areas—in fact, the spearhead of bourgeois-feudal reaction in rural areas" (*On the Agrarian Question*).

Everywhere in the world revolutionary history, the rich peasantry became the "spearhead of the counterrevolution" only after feudalism and landlordism were liquidated, but, according to our polit bureau documents, it becomes the spearhead of counterrevolution during the stage of the agrarian democratic revolution itself!

Does the polit bureau bother to understand what it is talking and of which class it is thinking? Is it elementary

Marxism to talk of rich peasants as "spearhead of counterrevolution in the countryside" in the stage of basically democratic revolution as ours is necessarily at present? It is only bungling on the stage of the revolution and the class roles in the rural side that can land anybody into this ultraleftism.

(4) *No Distinction Between Landlord and Rich Peasant?* The polit bureau finds fault with the Andhra secretariat for having drawn, in its *Draft Note*, a distinction between the landlord and the rich peasant. To quote: "Thus through this definition an attempt is made to repudiate...collaborationist with the most ruthless exploiters".

Has this lumping together, this identifying of the rich peasant with the landlord, anything to do with Leninist principles? In his classification of the peasantry in his preliminary draft theses on the agrarian question does not Lenin place the rich peasant in a category different from that of the landlord-feudal and capitalist?

This is what Lenin says:

"However, expropriation even of the big peasants certainly cannot be made an immediate task of the victorious proletariat, for the material, in particular the technical conditions, as well as social conditions for the socialisation of such farms are still lacking. In individual, and probably exceptional cases, those parts of their land which they rent out in small plots, or which are particularly needed by the surrounding small peasant population will be confiscated; the small peasants will also be guaranteed, on certain terms, the free use of part of agricultural machines belonging to the rich peasants, etc. As a general rule, however, the proletarian state must allow the big peasants to retain their land, confiscating it only if they resist the power of the toilers and the exploited. The experience of the Russian proletarian revolution in which the fight against the big peasantry was complicated and protracted by a number of special conditions, nevertheless shows that, when taught a severe lesson for the slightest attempt at resistance, this

stratum is capable of loyally fulfilling the requirements of the proletarian state, and even begins to be imbued, although very slowly, with respect for the government which protects all who work and is ruthless towards the idle rich" ("Preliminary Draft of Theses on the Agrarian Question").

Lenin, in his report to the eighth congress of the CPSU(B) on the "Work in the Rural Districts" had occasion to make certain other generalisations on the same lines as described above. Lenin, while quoting Engels who said "Perhaps it will not everywhere be necessary to suppress even the big peasantry by force", observes thus: "Even in regard to the rich peasants, we are not as decisive as we are in regard to bourgeoisie; we do not demand the absolute expropriation of the rich peasants and the kulaks. This distinction is made in our programme. We say that the resistance and the counterrevolutionary efforts of the rich peasants must be suppressed. This is not complete expropriation."

Thus it is necessary to make a distinction between the rich peasant and the landlord. It is axiomatic, generally in bourgeois-democratic revolution, i.e. agrarian revolution, we confine ourselves to and mainly strike against all types of landlordism. That has been so with all the democratic revolutions so far in history. Even in Chinese people's democratic revolution, the rich peasant class that is liquidated is what is described as "the old type" rich peasantry, i.e. rich peasant with feudal tails, who is defined as heavily feudal-ridden and major part of whose exploitation is feudal, as given by the Communist Party of China as a special feature in China. Of course we too have to find out if any such sections exist in our country also.

Secondly, Lenin, while insisting that "the revolutionary proletariat, must immediately and unreservedly confiscate all the land of the landlords", observes that "we do not demand the expropriation of the rich peasants and the kulaks". And even in the stage when we have to expro-

priate the rich peasant, we "do not demand absolute expropriation..."

Thirdly, Lenin lays down, even in the socialist revolution, in regard to the rich peasants, "we are not as decisive as we are in regard to bourgeoisie".

To sum up: We must make distinction in regard to rich peasant not only as against the landlord, but even as against the bourgeoisie, even in the stage of the proletarian revolution. This is the Leninist position.

Lastly, unlike the landlord who does no manual labour and lives merely on parasitic exploitation, the rich peasant not only exploits labour but also does manual labour. This manual labour, as the Chinese documents define, is in the nature of "principal labour" not secondary or subsidiary.

This is why this distinction is made in the bolshevik programme.

Why does the polit bureau set at nought all this Leninist teaching on this question and assert that "there is no reason for this distinction"? This distinction is necessary for both strategical and tactical approach to the rich peasantry in different stages of our revolution.

(5) *Rich Peasants' Land To Be Confiscated along with the Landlords?* The slogan of "khas lands of the rich peasant to be confiscated" is no doubt incorporated in the political thesis. But in connection with this one point needs to be mentioned here. Due to the fact that at the party congress hundreds of amendments came in from the delegates and all these could not be taken up at the congress itself for lack of time, they were examined by an amendments committee. Regarding this particular point about the confiscation of the khas land of the rich peasant, this amendment was put forward by some delegates but the amendments committee recommended to the central committee and to the drafting commission to reject this amendment. Despite this the drafting commission incorporated it in the final thesis which emerged out of their hands.

Again after the controversy on the question of the rich



peasant and the expropriation of his land is raised by the Andhra secretariat, the polit bureau in its subsequent documents advanced still further along the wrong path and issued the slogan of confiscation of the rich peasant's lands along with the landlord's.

First of all, let us examine what the term khas means. As far as we understand, this is used for "privately cultivated" part of the lands of zamindars, mokhasadars, etc. But if the same connotation is applied in the case of the rich peasant, particularly in ryotwari areas, it amounts to confiscating all his land, because generally he possesses none other. We do not know how the position would be in other provinces in India as regards the application of this slogan. But anyway this must be characterised as a slip.

One can understand the standpoint of the polit bureau if it were to say that "In individual, and probably exceptional, cases, those parts of their (rich peasant—*Andhra secretariat*) land which they rent out in small plots, or which are particularly needed by the surrounding small peasant population will be confiscated", or "confiscating it only if they resist the power of the toilers and the exploited". This would be the correct position even in case the present stage of our struggle is a struggle against the entire capital, including the rich peasant.

It can also be understood if the polit bureau were to advance the slogan on the lines of the Communist Party of China to liquidate the rich peasant with feudal tails, because, it would form part of our consistent struggle against feudalism.

But the slogan of confiscation of khas lands, as advanced in the thesis and extended by the polit bureau in its *Agrarian Question*, to the entire land has no theoretical basis whatsoever and is totally wrong.

#### *Re: Slogan 'Nationalisation of Land'*

The document of the polit bureau *On the Agrarian Question* makes certain remarks about the omission of this slogan in our earlier programme.

But, in doing so, does it take into consideration the experience before us, or at least put itself the question why many brother communist parties like the Communist Party of China and parties in the East European people's democracies have dropped this slogan from their programme and adopted other intermediary slogans and measures which in process lead to realise that slogan? It does neither.

Further, the information goes, that the Chinese Communist Party's agrarian laws "not only permit private ownership but also free management and sale of land".

In East European democracies this land question is dealt with differently. The position after full four years of their establishment is as follows: "The solution of the agrarian problem in the countries of people's democracy *substantially differs* from its solution in the Soviet Union... In the countries of people's democracy, however, private property on land exists at present, which represents additional possibilities for the development of capitalist elements in the villages" (*Tass News and Views*, bulletin dated 30 September 1949).

The document of the polit bureau *On the Agrarian Question* makes the following statements on the question of nationalisation of land. As far as our experience goes in our province they do not correspond to the realities at present. This slogan is said to be revolutionary slogan for ryotwari areas: "Actually the ryotwari areas had no slogan of revolutionary transformation all these days."

"Will it be a rallying slogan? Will it galvanise the rural masses? It will definitely do so. Because, the basic masses of the rural population on which we have to rely are the proletarian and the semiproletarian elements—the agricultural labour and poor peasants who have been and are being rapidly expropriated because of private property in land."

The argument that "basic masses of the rural population on which we have to rely are the proletarian and the semiproletarian elements" is nothing special to India. It holds

good with all the countries of people's democracies, including China.

While the document on one side says that this slogan of nationalisation of land does not go down the throats of the middle peasant easily "because he desperately clings to the illusions of small property holder", etc. it straight-away jumps to the other side and argues that "the masses have seen that under present property relations, they have been expropriated" and that "life itself is proving to them that all private property—whether feudal or bourgeois, whether landlord or smallscale peasant property—leads to expropriation of the peasant—it means property of exploiting classes", etc.

Can unreal and imaginary estimation of the situation go further? We would like to ask the polit bureau in which part of the country this mass peasant consciousness is supposed to have reached such heights, that it is not only against feudal property relations but against even capitalist relations, i.e. small property relations too—at present? Neither our past work in the rural side, nor reports reaching our hands from any part of the country can provide us with such 'optimism'.

Further, it is amazing to say that this slogan is a "galvanising" one in the ryotwari areas. It is exactly in these areas private property interests and instincts are developed stronger than in comparatively more feudal-ridden areas, and that both the poor and the middle peasant sections violently react against this slogan. It is precisely because of this that the programme of the Communist International gives the following warning: "The complete abolition of private property in land, and the nationalisation of the land cannot be brought about immediately in the more developed capitalist countries, where the principle of private property is deep rooted among a broad strata of the peasantry. In such countries, the nationalisation of all land can only be brought about gradually, by means of a series of transitional measures."

On one hand, in the name of a "new" and "fundamental

reestimate of class relations in agrarian areas" the polit bureau departs from the colonial theses, revising every basic formulation of it, on the other, when the polit bureau goes to and in so far as it does borrow from the theses of the Communist International, i.e. the slogan of nationalisation of land, it does so opportunistically and mechanically. Why does the polit bureau do this? Is it because it suits leftism? Why is the polit bureau not otherwise consistent even in its own line? On the one hand, it flies full length and declares that capitalist land relations dominate over feudal land relations in our country. On the other, it does not apply the Stalinist warning in regard to nationalisation of land to its own analysis!

Let us see what the warning of Stalin is: as stated by P. Yudin, in his review of the eleventh volume of the *Works of Stalin* published in the *Communist* No 1 of 1950:

"Comrade Stalin clearly foresaw the ways of solving the land problem in countries which would cast loose from the imperialist system. In reply to those who insisted upon the nationalisation of the land, especially in capitalistically developed countries, Comrade Stalin, in his speech on 'The Programme of the Comintern', said:

" 'Those comrades are wrong who think that the more capitalistically developed a country is, the easier will it be to carry through the nationalisation of *all* the land there. On the contrary, the more capitalistically developed a country is, the more difficult will it be to carry through the nationalisation of *all* the land, because the traditions of private ownership of land are all the stronger there, and the more difficult will it be, consequently, to combat these traditions.' "

"Comrade Stalin, therefore, warned that nationalisation of the land must not be proclaimed at once, on the very first day of the proletarian revolution, because the peasantry, imbued as it is with the property instinct, will not be at once be able to digest this slogan. It is by this wise policy of Stalin that the communist and workers' parties in the people's democracies are guiding themselves today,

gradually preparing the labouring peasant for collective forms of agriculture and production."

The idea of nationalisation is generally associated with the masses as complete expropriation of the rights of private property—as one that takes away their right of free use, sale, etc. Besides this, the bourgeois-imperialist scare-propaganda of anticommunism, which plays on the private property instincts of the small proprietors, has added to the fears of these sections. It is for us to take this into serious consideration when we raise such a slogan, so that we foil the attempts of the class enemy who is bent upon disrupting the toilers' front by driving a wedge between the small proprietors and the proletariat. Any attempt on our part to outrun the consciousness of the masses will prove terribly disruptive.

The stand that "the basic masses of the rural population on which we have to rely are the proletarian and semi-proletarian elements" and hence we need not worry to issue this slogan, does not lead us anywhere. The poor and the middle peasant population put together at present will be more than 30-40 per cent of the rural population. The slogan that does not help us to win these sections for the democratic front and only scares them away for different reasons as stated above, only isolates the "basic classes" from the rest of the toilers, and helps the enemy to defeat the revolution.

If such is the case, would it not be imperative that we do not push this slogan as it is and instead follow the course adopted by other brother communist parties in the new democracies and China?

#### *Re: the Role of Middle Peasant*

As far as the role of the middle peasant is concerned, the polit bureau documents take an anomalous position. Describing his vacillations in the people's democratic revolution the document of the polit bureau says: "But at the same time, he vacillates because...but also against the feudal landlords."

"There is no doubt that initially his vacillations will be very big; incited by the rich peasant, he may be hostile."

"The middle peasant vacillates most: . . . His vacillations will be, therefore, of the most violent type".

Mark you, these statements are made after delivering a long attack on the formulation "middle peasant is a firm ally in the revolution", alleged to have been made by the Andhra secretariat in its *Draft Note!*

After all this is said, the polit bureau adds that "And yet he can be won over; . . . win him over would prove fatal".

The positive assertion loses all its significance by profuse negative statements made against the middle peasant's role in the new democratic revolution. And exactly this constitutes the anomaly.

Let us elaborate this point.

It is classical Leninist position that the middle peasant vacillates in the fight between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie. His vacillations come precisely because he as a property owner swings to the side of the bourgeoisie, and as a toiler swings over to the side of the proletariat. Hence Lenin in his "Preliminary Draft Theses on the Agrarian Question", asks the communist parties to follow this dictum:

"The revolutionary proletariat cannot set itself the task—at least in the immediate future and in the initial period of the dictatorship of the proletariat—of winning over this stratum, but must confine itself to the task of neutralising it, i.e. making it neutral in the struggle between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie."

To be clear, this is stated in relation to the stage of the socialist revolution.

What we set down to discuss is not about the middle peasant's role in the socialist stage and the proletarian revolution. It spells bankruptcy for a Marxist simply to paraphrase the above and apply it verbatim to the present stage of people's democratic revolution. Why? Because the

fight today is not a straight fight between proletarians and semiproletarians on one side and all the bourgeoisie, including the rich peasants, on the other. The stranglehold of imperialism, the dominant feudal forms of exploitation, etc. are factors additional, which in their turn impose upon us special tasks, such as of national-liberation and agrarian revolution. Is it correct then to say that in all stages, i.e. general anti-imperialist, agrarian-democratic, and socialist, his vacillations will be either of the same type or that he is to be characterised a vacillating ally? It is definitely incorrect.

The polit bureau has come to this anomalous and erroneous stand on the middle peasant, because of the following reasons:

Firstly, it has taken up the position that the present stage of our revolution is a revolution against the entire capital, including the rich peasant.

Secondly, it has bothered least to understand the imperialist stranglehold, and the necessity of fight against it. Similarly, by its pseudoclass analysis that capitalist relations have become dominant and feudal relations subsidiary, it has watered down the character of the revolution which is basically agrarian-democratic.

Lastly, while defining the role of the middle peasant, it throws out formulations such as "initially his vacillations will be very big; incited by the rich peasant he may be hostile"; "his vacillations are however bound to be great", "and the middle peasant vacillates most", etc.

Once it begins to define its role in the present stage this way, it is meaningless to state that there is an "important place for him" in the democratic front, etc. The assertion becomes more formal than real.

It is exactly this position that strengthens the hands of those comrades who have advanced the slogan of neutralising the middle peasant in the present stage. Once the polit bureau characterised him as a vacillating ally, these comrades say, it is in substance conceding their position of neutralisation, and put the question: Is it not a fact that

the bolsheviks in their strategy for October revolution have only set task of neutralising the middle peasant and yet were able to win him over to the side of the revolution? If so, why should we also not set ourselves the slogan of neutralising this violent vacillator in our strategy? The polit bureau cannot have any answer to this—except accept it.

Thus the enunciation of the polit bureau as regards the role of the middle peasant rather strengthens the deviation that the stage of the revolution is similar to the October revolution, and fails to drive home the actual role of the middle peasant and its importance in the people's democratic revolution.

Under the caption "Middle Peasant, Not a 'Firm' Ally", the polit bureau attacks the Andhra secretariat, alleging that it had made the formulation "middle peasant is a firm ally in the revolution".

Not to give any room for doubt, let us quote from the *Draft Note* of the Andhra Secretariat all the formulations made in this connection.

The following formulations are in fact quotations from Mao.

"Our line is to rely on poor peasants and solidly unite with the middle peasants (not as some of our comrades say 'neutralise' them) to destroy the feudal and semifeudal exploitation system of the landlord class and the old type of rich peasants."

"All these are concrete policies that must be adopted by our party in carrying out the strategic task of solidly uniting middle peasants."

"Secondly, it is necessary to resolutely unite middle peasants and not injure the basic principles and the task of our agrarian reform will surely triumphantly be completed."

And it is only at one place does the Andhra secretariat make its independent formulation, thus:

"(3) The middle peasant in this new democratic revolution is to be our ally. And it is our task to solidly unite



with the middle peasant. It is wrong to think of neutralising him as in the stage of socialist revolution."

Thus it is clear that nowhere the Andhra secretariat had formulated exactly in the terms quoted by the polit bureau. The term "firm ally" is supposed to imply that the Andhra secretariat is guilty of equating the revolutionary role of the middle peasant with that of the poor peasant and agricultural labourer. In fact no such guilt exists. All the quotations cited above are only emphasising the necessity and determination of the proletariat and its party to bring the middle peasant onto the side of the revolution.

The polit bureau by attacking this position, in the way it has, has reduced the role of the middle peasant to the position of a vacillating ally, i.e. the position assigned by the polit bureau to the middle bourgeoisie after the editorial of *For a Lasting Peace, For a People's Democracy* has appeared and the consequent correction.

If such are the facts, and in the face of these, if the polit bureau still continues to think that it has correctly defined the role of the middle peasant, is it not self-deception?

Last but not least, the manner in which the documents of the polit bureau have placed the role of agricultural labour is itself thoroughly wrong and leading only to utter disruption of the forces of agrarian revolution.

The *Draft Note* of the Andhra secretariat had pointed out the following:

"Regarding the demands of agricultural labour, the secretariat is of the opinion, that it is wrong to import mechanically relations between a capitalist and an industrial worker into the village life where small peasant economy is dominant. It only disrupts the new democratic front, also does not get the demands of the agricultural labourers satisfied, because this mechanical outlook will drive the poor and the middle peasant into the fold of the rich peasant."

The document of the polit bureau on *Tactical Line* went hammer and tongs against these formulations and dubbed them "openly letting down the agricultural workers". The document of the polit bureau *On the Agrarian Question* put the demands of agricultural labour (living wage, limitation of hours of work, social insurance, and so on and so forth) on exactly the same par as the industrial working class. Comrades in some provinces, following this, brought forward as slogans for agricultural workers' strikes, the demand of Rs 80 living wage, Rs 55 dearness allowance, 8-hour day; etc. (the basic demands put forward by the AITUC).

From this whole thing followed two consequences.

Firstly, this absurd and mechanical importation into village life of the relations between a capitalist and an industrial worker—wherever it was done on the lines the documents of the polit bureau demanded—signally failed in getting the real demands of the agricultural labourers satisfied and only disrupted the new democratic front in the countryside exactly as the *Draft Note* of the Andhra secretariat had warned.

Secondly, the mechanical equating by the polit bureau of the Indian agricultural workers with the agricultural workers of the advanced capitalist countries; the failure to point out the special character of the agricultural workers in a colonial country like India, namely, the fact that they are crushed down above all by all sorts of feudal exploitation and only the agrarian revolution can ameliorate their condition by abolishing all feudal remnants and giving them land; all this meant that the key role of agricultural labour in the agrarian revolution, in the struggle for abolition of landlordism and for land to the tiller, was totally underplayed; and instead the agricultural labourers' fight was mainly confined to only demands like wage, etc.

Thus, to sum up, all the slogans of the polit bureau on the agrarian front—characterisation of rich peasant as the main spearhead of reaction and of middle peasant as the

"vacillating ally", the slogan of "nationalisation of land", the mechanical equating of the agricultural labour to the industrial working class etc.—form one complete left-sectarian disruptive system. Wherever comrades in the provinces applied these slogans faithfully, it only led to complete disruption of the forces of agrarian revolution— isolation of agricultural labour, scaring the poor and middle peasant into the arms of the rich peasant, strengthening the hands of the landlord and so on.

The enormity of the mistakes of the polit bureau on the agrarian front can be fully realised only when one takes into account the fact that the agrarian revolution is the axis of the colonial revolution.

No doubt strong remnants of our earlier period of deep-rooted reformism on the kisan front were continuing to persist inside the party after the second congress. These of course had to be fought out and corrected. But instead of doing this—and in the name of doing this—what the polit bureau did was to derail the whole discussion and present a thoroughly disruptive left-sectarian thesis.

But in its latest document ("Polit Bureau Document for all Party Members", No 14, dated 2 March 1950), all this selfcritical analysis is missing, but it goes on in the strain that it has combated reformism correctly, and only just erred by not emphasising the antifeudal character of the revolution and a small mistake of wrongly lumping together the rich peasants with the landlords!

Is it not clear that the Communist Party of India if it were to chalk out a correct strategy can do so not by a simple correction here and a little amendment there in the document of the polit bureau, *On the Agrarian Question*, but only by completely rejecting it and drafting a new agrarian resolution?

#### V. CHINESE PATH AND FORMS OF STRUGGLE

Let us first recall what the Andhra secretariat has said in its *Draft Note* in this connection.

"(1) The offensive launched by Nehru government against the Communist Party of India is a part of the international offensive started by world imperialism. It is an offensive by which it ranges itself against all progressive and democratic forces of the world. To put it bluntly, this offensive is nothing but a cruel civil war let loose by the imperialist-bourgeois-feudal combine against the working class, peasants and other toiling masses. The stage has come wherein every day-to-day partial struggle has to be fought armed and semiarmed. Armed resistance has been forced on to the agenda of revolution by this offensive. Either we resist inch by inch the civil war and offensive let loose against us by all means at disposal of the people or allow the bourgeoisie a free hand to crush the forces of revolution and end in the victory of counter-revolution.

"(2) Keeping all this in view, in areas where we are a good proportion in the masses like certain parts of Andhra, Kerala, Bengal, etc., the time has come to think in terms of guerilla warfare (Chinese way) against military onslaughts of Nehru government which is bent on mercilessly liquidating us. Unless with a clear perspective we plan out methods of resistance, and if we leave it to spontaneity, future history will charge us with gross betrayal of the revolution.

"(3) The liberation struggle in the form of Telangana is almost a pointer in the possible direction of forming two governments, which in the process must lead to general uprising and capture of power by the people. There are many more territories such as Telangana with a similar social-political-economic and terrain conditions spread throughout the length and breadth of the country. They can and must be utilised as guerilla districts to begin with, which afford ample scope to develop them as liberation bases. For example, in Andhra alone areas like Rayalaseema, Telangana border areas like Munagala, Nuzvid, Chintalapudi and the agency belt, where agriculture is primitive and undeveloped, where landlordism is domi-

nant, with poor peasant and wage labour forming overwhelming majority of population, where already there is sufficient stir in the direction of agrarian revolt, present before us huge reserves of revolutionary possibilities. Backward communication system, topographic and terrain conditions are exceptionally suited for prolonged guerilla battles (Chinese way) which lead to establishment of liberation bases. It is with such a perspective we have to successfully plan out the future course of the revolution. Not to have such a clear perspective and allowing ourselves to drift into spontaneity is a crime against revolution. 'The era of contempt for perspective must end along with era of reformism' and a clearcut reorientation and well-defined strategy must open along with the revolutionary perspective. The Chinese liberation struggle offers us a living example from which we have to adopt many invaluable lessons" (the words 'resistance bases' which occur in the *Draft* have been subsequently corrected into 'liberation bases'—ANDHRA SECRETARIAT).

"(4) Our revolution in many respects differs from the classical Russian revolution; but is to a great extent similar to the Chinese revolution. The perspective is likely not that of general strike and armed uprising, leading to the liberation of the rural side; but the dogged resistance and prolonged civil war in the form of agrarian revolution, culminating in the capture of political power by the democratic front in the process of a bitter struggle for the new democracy.

"(5) The stage has come wherein even day-to-day struggle of the toilers has to be contemplated and planned in the form of armed or partially armed resistance (Chinese way).

"This is the perspective opened before us.

"Either we understand the perspective clearly and plan out our work in future or we drift into spontaneity and all sorts of deviations and disruption. The revolutionary history and its rich lessons demonstrate before us the path we have to choose. The path is that of Chinese liberation

struggle under the leadership of Comrade Mao Tse-tung, the practical, political and theoretical leader of the mighty colonial and semicolonial revolution."

In a nutshell, what are the main conclusions that emerge from all that is quoted above?

First, the offensive started by the imperialist-bourgeois-feudal combine against working class, peasants, toiling masses, is nothing but unleashing a civil war. That is, we are decidedly drawn into a civil war.

Second, the civil war must be fought out by the revolutionary forces with armed resistance and guerilla warfare, besides other forms of struggle. That is, the question of armed resistance is forced on the agenda.

Third, the course of our struggle is and will be basically on the lines of the Chinese struggle, i.e. establishment of liberation bases through prolonged guerilla warfare, and nourish the liberation armies to completely liberate the country from the imperialist-bigbusiness-feudal clutches.

How has the polit bureau appreciated these points?

It poohpooed them as a call for struggle without people, as only an attempt to appear heroic, and guerilla warfare in cooperation with rich peasants, etc.

It does not stop at this. It accuses the Andhra secretariat for its alleged contrasting of the Russian and the Chinese revolution and concludes that there is nothing new to learn from the Chinese revolution besides the Russian revolution.

"Guerilla warfare against the Nehru government in co-operation with the rich peasants can you beat it?"—thus goes the jeering, heckling and ridiculing of the Andhra secretariat. It may be good ridicule, but bad Marxism. Why is it the polit bureau wonders at this? Were there not in history instances of guerilla warfare, not only 'in co-operation' with rich peasants, but also in alliance with certain sections of the bourgeoisie. Was not the partisan warfare in Hitler-occupied Europe conducted not only in co-operation with the rich peasant but also in cooperation

with sections of the bourgeoisie? Did not partisan acts during the period of 1905-07 in Russia, take place when the rich peasant was considered still an ally of the proletariat? Is it not a fact that in the recent Chinese revolution, the guerilla warfare could be conducted with even the middle bourgeoisie in the united front? Numerous instances such as these can be cited. But our polit bureau is satisfied with ignoring all this experience and trying to make a polemical joke out of it.

Curiously enough, the polit bureau puts a big condition for the guerilla warfare, without which it would be a crime to think of beginning guerilla warfare. That the guerilla warfare without the support of the people is unthinkable for any revolutionary is beyond dispute. But what the polit bureau states is not that. It attacks the Andhra secretariat because it has suggested that "in areas where we are in a good proportion in the masses like certain parts of Andhra, Kerala and Bengal, the time has come to think in terms of guerilla warfare". Is it not an elementary truth that the revolutionary forces have to adopt different forms of struggle, including guerilla warfare, if the counterrevolutionary forms of struggle, put in force by the enemy, force upon you such? Do you abandon partisan resistance on the plea that the "overwhelming majority" of the people have not yet supported you? Is it not a fact that sometimes in history the revolutionary forces have to carry on partisan warfare even while they are still in a minority in order to nourish their armies and grow into a majority from a minority? It is correct to say that our partisan actions will be and must be in the objective interests of the majority. But it is quite another thing to put a big condition that one should start thinking in terms of guerilla warfare only, when one has won over the "overwhelming majority". If this concept of the support of "overwhelming majority" is extended and applied, can one dream of partisan warfare in any province in the whole of India at the present stage? Is it not again another indisputable truth that without partisan warfare today as

the main form of struggle the revolutionary forces in India would be liquidated by the Nehru government, without any revolutionary resistance worth calling? Does the polit bureau think that the revolutionary forces today can nourish their armies if confined to the forms of struggle that we have been adopting formerly in the period when both the revolution and the counterrevolution had not reached such a stage as at present?

The polit bureau counterposes the task of organising armed guerilla resistance to the task of mobilising the overwhelming majority of people. This is nothing except a failure on its part to realise the urgent and immediate particular task of the hour, while arguing about general, constant, fundamental task, i.e. mobilisation of the entire people. From where does this understanding and confusion arise? The polit bureau evidently equates the armed guerilla resistance with that of organising an insurrection. Of course it is stupid that any revolutionary party embarks upon giving a call for insurrection without the majority of the proletariat as well as the majority of the toilers are won over to the side of revolution. But can we extend this point as a precondition to guerilla resistance, i.e. a form of struggle called forth by the objective conditions of revolution? Absolutely not.

Neither has the Andhra secretariat advocated issuing a call for insurrection nor is the answer of the polit bureau to the point raised by them. It was for such 'revolutionaries' who raise the question of general fundamental tasks when faced with particular tasks that Lenin delivered a stern lecture:

"As hitherto, the basis and chief content of our work is to develop the consciousness of the masses. But let us not forget that, in addition to this general, constant and fundamental task, times like the present in Russia impose other, particular and special tasks. Let us not become pedants and philistines, let us not evade these special tasks of the moment, these special tasks of the given forms of struggle, by meaningless references to our permanent duties, which



remain the same in all times and circumstances" ("Lessons of the Moscow Uprising").

In this connection it would be instructive to quote from Manuilsky's speech at the seventh congress of the Comintern:

"It must not be forgotten that fascism learned from defeated tsarism how to prevent the communists from 'utilising legal possibilities', that it has surrounded its mass organisations with an espionage system of such wide ramifications as the tsarist secret police never succeeded in organising" (*From Peace Front to People's War*).

In our case, have not the imperialists and their lackeys not only adopted them all but also stooped to measures of fascist repression even in the initial stages so as to try to destroy the growing revolution? Is it not exactly when the forces of revolution and counterrevolution are unequal, and for a time the revolutionary forces have to put up with a stronger enemy, that partisan form of struggle becomes not only necessary but also inevitable? Here is what Mao says:

"When a strong enemy launches its campaign of armed invasion and occupation against a weak nation, it is obvious that the forces and weapons of the enemy are in a favourable position while those of the invaded and oppressed nations are in an unfavourable one. But when the latter not only disdains capitulation, but attempts at self-emancipation, then guerilla war becomes a form of warfare in which inferior forces and arms are opposed to superior forces and arms" (*Aspects of Chinese Anti-Jap Struggle*).

Of course Mao had made the above statement in a slightly different set of circumstances, i.e. when Japanese imperialism had directly invaded the country and when the entire people including the ruling Kuomintang bourgeoisie took up their stand in opposition to it, etc. But the analogy holds good on the issue in discussion before us at present. In our country when the anti-imperialist revolutionary upsurge was advancing with lightning speed and

gathering momentum the imperialists and the native big reactionary bourgeoisie who were mortally afraid of being swept away entered into a counterrevolutionary collaboration against the revolution. The revolutionary forces in a way are faced with a situation as to meet the offensive of the counterrevolution which for the time not only possesses superior forces and arms but other temporary advantages such as illusions about the bourgeoisie in considerable sections of the people, etc. The issue that stands clearly before the working class and its party, the Communist Party, as the vanguard of the revolution is whether to resist this counterrevolutionary offensive with suitable forms of struggle or collapse before the offensive without any resistance.

The imperialist-bigbusiness-feudal combine with the organised strength is bent upon the liquidation of the revolutionary forces and it is precisely in order to preserve our forces from destruction and to advance to national emancipation without capitulation, that makes it incumbent on us to take up the question of partisan warfare. Has the polit bureau taken into serious consideration all this? No.

However the polit bureau may argue that it has said in the *Tactical Line* that we use all the forms, including the guerilla warfare, corresponding to the needs of the situation. But this statement does not take us very far. Why? Once it poohpoohs the suggestion of the Andhra secretariat, of guerilla warfare in areas where we are in a good proportion of people like Andhra, Kerala and Bengal in which the class enemy launched his terror rule with arms, it repudiates the fact that guerilla warfare in the circumstances of today has become the basis and main form of struggle set before the Indian revolutionary movement as a whole.

Here it would be far from complete, if we do not examine the political and ideological roots of this deviation and distorted outlook of the polit bureau so that it can be fought out in the concrete. What are they?

Firstly, the polit bureau has woefully failed to examine the question of "forms of struggle". In the background of socio-economic-political conditions prevailing in our country, when the issue of armed guerilla struggle was raised by the Andhra secretariat. Secondly, an erroneous, mechanical, anti-Marxist understanding and conception of proletarian hegemony gripped the polit bureau, as a consequence of which it landed in putschist and adventurist tactics on the workingclass front in cities and paralysing and liquidationist tactics on the peasant front in the countryside. Thirdly the polit bureau has failed to understand the colonial setup of our country with its historical peculiarities distinguished from that of any capitalist, independent imperialist country in its social, economic and political factors.

Now let us proceed to examine each in its full details.

Below are the two principal theoretical propositions by which a Marxist must be guided while examining the issue of "forms of struggle", as enunciated by Lenin:

"Let us begin from the beginning. What are the fundamental demands which every Marxist should make of an examination of the question of the forms of struggle? In the first place, Marxism differs from all primitive forms of socialism by the fact that it does not bind the movement to any one particular form of struggle. It admits the most varied forms of struggle; and it does not 'concoct' them, but only generalises, organises, gives conscious expression to those forms of struggle of the revolutionary classes which arise of themselves in the course of the movement. Absolutely hostile to all abstract formulas and to all doctrinaire recipes, Marxism demands an attentive attitude to the mass struggle in progress, which with the development of the movement, with the growth of class consciousness of the masses, with the accentuation of economic and political crises, is continually giving rise to new and more varied methods of defence and offence. Marxism, therefore, positively does not reject any form of struggle. Under no circumstances does Marxism confine itself to

the forms of struggle that are possible and that exist at the given moment only, recognising as it does that new forms of struggle, unknown to the participants of the given period, inevitably arise as the given social situation changes. In this respect Marxism learns, if we may so express it, from mass practice, and makes no claim whatever to teach the masses forms of struggle invented by 'systematisers' in the seclusion of their studies. We know—said Kautsky, for instance, when examining the forms of social revolution—that the coming crisis will introduce new forms of struggle that we are now unable to foresee.

"In the second place, Marxism demands an absolutely historical examination of the question of the forms of struggle. To treat the question apart from the concrete historical situation is to be ignorant of the very rudiments of dialectical materialism. At different stages of economic evolution, depending on differences in political and national-cultural conditions, conditions of life and other conditions, different forms of struggle appear in the foreground and become the principal forms of struggle; and in connection with this, the secondary, auxiliary forms of struggle undergo change in their turn. To attempt to answer yes or no to the question whether any particular means of struggle should be used, without making a detailed examination of the concrete situation of the given movement at the given stage of its development, means completely to abandon the Marxist position" ("Partisan Warfare").

That our polit bureau has not only not guided itself on these lines but quite the contrary, can be proved; firstly, because of its insistence on, and dogged clinging to, the strategy of political general strike and countrywide armed uprising; secondly, because of its refusal to undertake a historical examination of the question, i.e. the objective economic, social, political conditions prevailing in the country.

Has the polit bureau, while ad nauseam repeating the terms "crisis", "upsurge" and "revolution", understood

what they actually mean in terms of objective political evaluation? Evidently not. If it had understood, it would have characterised the period as a period of civil war; it would have examined carefully the 'retaliatory' forms of struggle the class enemy had unleashed against the revolutionary forces and their vanguard, the Communist Party, proper, practicable, suitable forms of struggle, while discarding some, as the situation demanded of it; it would also have discussed the problem in concrete and laid down before the party what form or forms of struggle have to appear more and more in the foreground as the principal or main form or forms of struggle and what are becoming the secondary and auxiliary forms of struggle. The polit bureau did nothing of the kind and only went on repeating abstract 'recipes' in a dogmatic and sectarian manner, while the reformists opportunistically began to sing their songs characterising every militant and armed resistance of the people as 'adventurism', 'anarchism' and 'terrorism', in the same typical fashion that the Nehru-Patel government and its henchmen are doing day in and day out. Here curiously enough both the right-reformists and left-sectarians who pretend to 'fight' each other had fought each other in fact from the same bourgeois nationalist point of view which has nothing to do with the Marxist-Leninist revolutionary point of view. In the final analysis both the trends logically lead to disrupting and liquidating the revolutionary struggle. Neither of them analyses the question in its historical background nor can either evolve correct forms of struggle for the fighting people. Both cheat them and betray them. The two classical examples in the recent history of the party are the Joshian reformist running away before the ruthless repression of the enemy and the reckless adventurist forms of struggle advanced by the polit bureau under B. T. Ranadive's leadership. ...

Now coming to the point, the postwar mass anti-imperialist revolutionary wave had begun almost at the very close of the antifascist war. In spite of the fact that

the big bourgeois leadership of the National Congress had attempted to sabotage, disrupt and misdirect the rising tide of the revolution, and in spite of the fact that the Communist Party failed to understand the nature and significance of it and to consciously lead it, nevertheless it was reaching huge proportions and qualitatively new heights. Of course it was also true that by the very virtue of it, the Communist Party of India placed itself at the head of the revolutionary upsurge which began to strike terror into the hearts of both imperialism and native reaction. It is on the crest of this revolutionary wave that the Congress leadership stretched its counterrevolutionary hand for collaboration with British imperialism, sealed the final betrayal which took the shape of the Mountbatten award. In a nutshell the situation was, irrespective of the sabotage of the National Congress leadership, irrespective of the lack of conscious political guidance by the political parties concerned, irrespective of the counterrevolutionary communal riots and one hundred thousand other manoeuvres of imperialists, and finally irrespective of the political vacillations and mistakes of the Communist Party of India while leading the postwar upsurge, the anti-imperialist national-emancipatory war went on extending, deepening and reaching ever new heights. This all-embracing national-liberation war assumed the characteristic of a civil war because of the fact that the big bourgeois leadership of Congress with its political following entered the scene direct as a counterrevolutionary force along with imperialism. The fact that the basic objective factors which gave rise to this postwar anti-imperialist upheaval continue today unabated, and the fact that the Communist Party and the working class along with the other toiling millions under its leadership has taken up the challenge of reaction to lead the revolution to its successful conclusion without surrender, create the conditions of a civil war, and the period in which we are living can be characterised in strictly scientific political terms only as a period of civil war. Anybody who refuses to see

the truth that the revolution has already begun, that classes and masses are in open political action and that there is actually a civil war on sees nothing and cannot claim a grain of revolutionary outlook in him. None should allow this reality of civil war to be submerged in phrases like 'crisis', 'upsurge', 'revolutionary movement', etc. so as to lose its complete and comprehensive meaning and significance, as our polit bureau has done.

Next one ought to proceed to examine the forms of struggle that the revolutionary people are using and the 'retaliatory' forms of struggle the counterrevolutionary government has unleashed against the revolution to counter and smash it. Lenin had pointed out "the general course of the Russian revolution after October, and the sequence of events in Moscow in the December days, have supplied striking proof of one of the most profound propositions of Marx: Revolution progresses by giving rise to strong and united counterrevolution, i.e. it compels the enemy to resort to more and more extreme measures of defence and in this way devises more powerful means of attack" ("The Lessons of Moscow Uprising").

The postwar revolutionary stage, besides its sweep, tempo and tenacity, has assumed new forms of struggle—higher and militant in character. From the usual, normal 'peace time' struggles such as peaceful strikes, demonstrations and agrarian struggles, i.e. they have advanced to qualitatively new heights such as political strikes, demonstrations, armed resistance, forcible seizure of grain and land from the landlords and zamindars; starting with RIN mutiny and several revolts in the army and police, the innumerable political battles fought by the militant working class throughout the country, the Telangana agrarian revolt, the tebhaga struggle in Bengal, Punnapra-Vayalar and North Malabar struggles and hundreds of peasant revolts all over the Indian subcontinent only go to demonstrate this truth. Thus the people had begun outright smashing the decadent socioeconomic fabric of this feudal ridden colonial society and creating a new order of their

own, free from all imperialist oppression and medieval exploitation.

The imperialist enemy on his part is not sleeping, but devising further brutal 'retaliatory' forms of struggle, besides the usual routine repressive laws and methods. He entered into compromise with the Congress leadership, to set up a puppet regime of reaction, of counterrevolution with an extended social base. He had managed to make the different provincial Congress legislatures, even before the final pact of Mountbatten award, enact ordinances, goonda acts, and public safety acts, etc.—all of them were deliberately and solely to be used against the rising revolutionary forces. By closing down all progressive and revolutionary press and by banning all meetings and demonstrations he had struck at all propaganda and agitation by the people's forces. By banning all the active mass and class organisations, he had made their functioning extremely difficult and even impossible. By his repressive fascist laws he had brought all strikes under unlawful actions. By indiscriminate arrests and detentions of all revolutionary workers and leaders, hurling them into the concentration camps, he had nullified every vestige of civil liberty and individual freedom of action. Every smallest agrarian struggle, every normal strike struggle of the workers and employees and every democratic agitation and mobilisation including that of Mahila Sangh is teargassed, lathicharged and subjected to shooting. He had set up thousands of counterrevolutionary goonda gangs in the name of 'home-guards', 'Congress volunteer corps' and 'anticommunist defence committees' in every territory. Huge armed constabulary which is nothing but a semi-military force with modern weapons such as tommy-guns and machine-guns is built and constantly let loose to commit all sorts of atrocities and sadistic terror against the people. In areas like Telangana, Andhra, etc., the police and army are given powers to shoot down any person they suspect to be a communist and already hundreds of trade-union and kisan workers and leaders have been shot



dead after they are arrested and captured. Virtually medieval fascist terror rule is clamped down upon the people.

Would it not be utter bankruptcy on the part of any revolutionary which would prove disastrous to the revolution if he were to stick to the 'usual', 'normal' and 'peaceful' forms of struggle against these fascist 'retaliatory' forms of struggle of the class enemy? That this would be so is proved from our own recent history.

First let us take the methods of organisation. It was incumbent upon us to seriously set to organise the party on illegal lines in the face of growing repression. But what did we do? Even after the December 1947 resolution of the central committee and for that matter even after the second party congress, the party leadership was living in a legalist utopia. Party committees that were elected during this period—a central committee of 31 with a polit bureau of nine, provincial committees and district committees of 21-30, with a secretariat of seven to nine etc.—were not on the basis of illegal functioning; every contact exposed, every party member including the newly-recruited put in the open list and party funds and huge properties left fully vulnerable, etc., all this was a testimony to our spontaneity and failure to change and adapt the party organisation to the new situation. The resultant damage is the living experience of every unit in the entire party.

Mass and class organisations continued working only as long as their full legal functioning was allowed by the class enemy; but once he began to strike at their leading committee and personnel they were almost paralysed. With total banning of them in many provinces the mass and class organisations went out of existence for all practical purposes except in name. Nonrealisation of the immense necessity of illegal organisation and functioning of the trade unions, kisan sabhas, etc. led to practical liquidation of them before the brutal onslaught of the enemy..

The attempt to push through along the old, usual, normal methods landed us in the present state of paralysation.

It is clear from the above that whereas in the former days our main form of conducting party and mass organisations was legal, the present conditions impose upon us the illegal party and mass organisations as the main form. Either one has to adapt to it or get liquidated.

In the same way whereas in earlier times, we had the legal press as the main form for agit-prop in today's circumstances it can only be illegal press as the main form of agit-prop.

In the former days, economic and political strikes, demonstrations and meetings, etc. were useful forms of struggle, to mobilise the people, to fight for the demands, to school and temper the working class and toiling millions, to nourish the revolutionary forces for the final assault on the class enemy. But to repeat them in the same manner under the conditions of white terror of the enemy would not only lead to a failure to achieve the abovestated objectives but end in annihilation of the cadre, disruption and liquidation of the revolutionary movement. Even in cases where conditions permit and demand such forms of struggle, one must be prepared to meet the armed offensive of the enemy with armed resistance and so train the participants as to deliver a swift attack and effect a timely retreat without draining the last drop of blood and ending in total smashup of the fighting vanguard.

The refusal to change the forms of struggle and adapt suitable new forms of struggle has led the polit bureau into adventurist actions in the trade-union front, and jails, etc., along with "bold strike calls" which either did not materialise at all or only partially materialised, with smashing blows from the enemy and incalculable losses. No serious revolutionary party would issue calls of general strike fixing the date months ahead of the event, if it were to take into consideration the fascist terror rule that is ranging in the country. Such calls served only as signals for the class enemy to attack the fighting people, even

before their mobilisation and organisation for the strike struggle had hardly begun. Many a general strike call goes to corroborate the same and nothing else. To characterise them as mere left-sectarianism is not enough; it is crude infantilism. Yet what our polit bureau had followed was this and this alone.

In the name of revolutionary situation and the necessity of adopting militant forms of struggle, including armed resistance, what did the polit bureau give? It advocated mass frontal clashes with the police and military. It is precisely against such tactics and forms of struggle that Lenin warns: "It would be folly to contend against artillery in crowds and defend barricades with revolvers", and advocates new tactics: "These tactics are the tactics of guerilla warfare. The organisation required for such tactics is that of mobile and exceedingly small units, units of ten, three or even two persons." The polit bureau has neither cared to learn from the above teachings of Lenin nor bothered to draw lessons from the big struggles such as Punnappara-Vayalar, North Malabar and similar other struggles. These struggles suffered devastating defeats, mainly because of the erroneous forms of struggle adopted, i.e. tactics of contending against artillery in crowds.

What did our polit bureau say when armed guerilla resistance against the armed offensive of the government was suggested by the Andhra secretariat? It vehemently attacked the proposal from two angles. Firstly, it straightaway asserted that armed guerilla resistance can be undertaken only after the majority of the people are won over! What did this imply? It clearly implied that without building a "united front" in advance, no armed guerilla resistance can be contemplated. Has this counterposing anything to do with Marxist-Leninist approach to the problem? Nothing whatsoever. Armed guerilla warfare is a form of struggle which no revolutionary desires to 'impose' upon the revolution according to his own subjective desires and fancies. It is called forth by objective political conditions, conditions which not in a small degree are imposed

upon the revolution by the class enemy and his methods of 'retaliation', i.e. counterrevolutionary terror, etc. It is stupid to think the class enemy lets loose his fascist white terror only after the Communist Party has won the majority of the people politically! Can a revolutionary evade the question of meeting the enemy's terror with counter-terror, with proper form of struggle, except at his peril? But our polit bureau asks the party and the fighting people not to resort to armed guerilla resistance until they have won the majority of the people to their side. This stand reduces itself to either mass armed resistance and mass frontal attacks against the enemy's military and police or no resistance at all but only go on doing propaganda to build democratic front while on one hand the united revolutionary movement that is built is being liquidated! This is nothing but crude subjectivism which works out forms of struggle from inside its own head, so to speak, which detaches the question from the concrete reality of civil war the enemy had let loose against the revolutionary people.

Are we to sit with folded hands, if the class enemy attacks us, until we have already become an overwhelming majority? None except the opportunist coward can propose this. Here is a passage from Lenin to teach us on the issue. While 'intellectuals' like Plekhanov, etc., were condemning the armed actions of the workers during the revolution in 1905, Lenin chastised them thus: "Marx regarded world history from the standpoint of those who make it without being in a position to calculate the chances infallibly beforehand, and not from the standpoint of an intellectual philistine who moralises: 'It was easy to foresee ...they should not have taken to ...'"

"Marx was also able to appreciate that there are moments in history when the desperate struggle of the masses even for a hopeless cause is essential for the further schooling of these masses and their training for the next struggle.

"Such a statement of the question is quite incompre-

hensible and even alien in principle to our presentday quasi-Marxists, who love to take the name of Marx in vain, to borrow only his estimate of the past, and not his ability to make the future. Plekhanov did not even think of it when he set out after December 1905 'to put the brakes on'.

"But it is precisely this question that Marx raises, without in the least forgetting that he himself in September 1870 regarded insurrection as a desperate folly.

"...The bourgeois canaille of Versailles', he writes, '...presented the Parisians with the alternative of taking up the fight or succumbing without a struggle. In the latter case the demoralisation of the working class would have been a far greater misfortune than the fall of any number of leaders'" ("Preface to Karl Marx's Letters to Kugelmann").

When the bourgeois curs of France had attacked the working class of France when conditions to organise an insurrection were not yet mature, Marx, who had warned the working class earlier against any premature uprising, came forth with a decisive lead to the revolutionary people. In our case had we organised an insurrection as such against the collaborationist regime? Except the Nehru-Patel government and its servitors nobody dares to utter such a lie. The fear of growing revolution made the government resort to fascist white terror, with a view to wipe out the vanguard of the revolution before it gains the upperhand. The only alternative placed before us under such conditions is either to accept the challenge and fight it back with suitable forms of struggle or succumb before the enemy without a struggle. A revolutionary can only accept the former and never the latter.

Of course one point needs to be clarified here. The passages quoted above emphasise the standpoint of the revolutionary, even in the unfavourable circumstances described therein. But in our case neither is our struggle 'desperate' nor is our case 'hopeless', for that matter the alternatives before are not merely either to accept a defeat

after a fight or succumb without a fight. Why? On a world scale a decisive shift is there in favour of our camp, i.e. the camp of democracy and socialism. Secondly, we are living in a period of daily accentuated and deepened capitalist crisis which unleashes powerful forces of struggle. Thirdly, we are living and working in a country which is a granite mine of immense revolutionary potentialities i.e. tremendous agrarian-revolutionary and the national-liberationist forces under the leadership of the working class and the Communist Party. Lastly, for more than four years in the postwar period our people have been fighting death-defying battles, and are already in the thick of liberation struggle.

It is no more a question before us whether we like to be dragged into a civil war or not. Irresistible logic of life has already dragged us into it, we are deep in it. Now the question is to adopt proper and suitable forms of struggle to victoriously come out of it. Those that resist this and refuse to adopt armed partisan warfare in the name of political general strike and countrywide armed uprising and those that denounce partisan warfare calling it adventurism, anarchism and terrorism on the pretext that there is no "revolutionary situation", represent nothing but two extreme poles of bourgeois-nationalist outlook from two ends, i.e. left-sectarian and right-reformist.

Here we would like to put a straight question to the polit bureau. Are you prepared to take up the position: either the Communist Party organises the political general strike and a countrywide armed uprising, i.e. classical strategy of insurrection or there is no other way and no other form of struggle to overthrow the enemy and capture power? Now the class enemy had already seized the initiative from us and created and is further creating conditions where we cannot organise such an insurrection, this is a clear truth. If you take the stand that the "classical insurrectionary" form of struggle is the exclusive form of struggle for capture of power then what is your way out of the situation as we are facing at present in our

country? You cannot show any alternative fighting line except to unreservedly accept the "Chinese path" i.e. the path of armed partisan warfare, coupled with the agrarian revolution to create liberation bases and liberation armies, while building a people's democratic front to defeat the enemy and establish people's democracy. Is it not anti-Marxist to cling to set forms of struggle, and make a fetish of them irrespective of any and every objective condition of the revolution? It is so and is in urgent need of rejection and refutation.

Why does the polit bureau cling to this anti-Marxist stand? As we have already pointed out above this deviation arises from an erroneous, mechanical and undialectical understanding of the concept of proletarian hegemony. Here we do not propose to go into the question of discussing what is meant by proletarian hegemony in the national-liberation struggle. The issue under discussion is about the ways and means of establishing that hegemony. What does the polit bureau say: "It is thus clear that hegemony cannot mean hegemony of the party without the working class being the action, but directly the hegemony of the working class led by the party, the entire working class in action." Leaving aside the ingenious interpretations and twists of the abovequoted passage, in plain and simple language it is: The working class can establish its hegemony only through a political general strike and armed uprising; the working class cannot secure hegemony through the Communist Party and the hegemony of the party is not to be considered as workingclass hegemony. No other forms of action by the working class except the political general strike and armed rising is considered as 'action' worth calling so. This is the position of the polit bureau on this question in a nutshell.

Is it permissible for any Marxist to draw such a vulgar distinction and differentiation between the hegemony of the working class and the hegemony of the Communist Party? Is it not creating a Chinese wall and a big gulf between the class and the party?

Thus the party is not only the vanguard, the organised detachment and the general staff of the working class but "a part of the class, closely bound up with it by all the fibres of its being". Is it not atrocious to depict an "unbridgeable gulf" between the party and the class? It is definitely so.

If one were to point out that our party as it stands today is lacking in the genuine characteristic of a bolshevik party, i.e. its weak ideological and theoretical grounding, its defective class composition, etc., it does not thereby question the basic premises discussed above. It only draws our attention to the fact that great many tasks face the party today, to build it as a real revolutionary party on the lines of Lenin-Stalin Bolshevik Party

Now coming to the question of proletarian hegemony, as deduced by the polit bureau from the abovestated erroneous outlook, is it correct to counterpose the hegemony of the party to the hegemony of the working class?

It is by the party that the hegemony of the proletariat has to be prepared and achieved. The concept "proletarian hegemony" is inconceivable without the party; the hegemony of the party cannot but be the hegemony of the working class. At the same time, the question arises about the actual and practical actions of the working class as a class by itself besides the role of its party, the vanguard and the organised detachment of the class. It would be erroneous if one were to foolishly deduce, from the severe criticism we have levelled against the polit bureau on this point, that the working class as a class can be left to inaction, while its party only leads the armed struggle in the countryside. Nothing more vulgar and farther from the truth exists than such an understanding.

The working class must organise itself by uniting the entire class. It must adopt suitable forms of struggle, and accumulate its strength while secretly lending every conceivable support to the armed struggle in the countryside. It will send its activists, whose safety in the workingclass centres is in serious jeopardy, to join the armed guerilla



bands. Because of its strategical position, i.e. directly linked with production of various goods including the war material, its key position in the transport services and its existence in the heart of the enemy-controlled cities and centres etc. it will be in a favourable position to assist the armed warfare starting from sabotage of war production to supplying information about the enemy in innumerable ways. Where conditions of white terror have not yet reached extreme proportions, and the overwhelming part of the class in unity can organise the strike struggle it will unhesitatingly utilise those opportunities too. From facts and figures which have appeared in the bourgeois press itself, which we know are far from complete and suppress most such news, we see that during the three months, October, November and December 1949 alone, no less than hundred and fifteen strikes took place in different industries. From this alone we are able to see what possibilities still exist for conducting strike actions of the working class provided correct tactics are adopted. Here, of course, it would be out of place to go into too many details of it. The point to be cleared is that without the working class being solidly organised and united under the leadership of the Communist Party, the final victory in the liberation struggle is unthinkable. The actions and organisation of Chinese working class during the period of the twenty years under white terror and its role in the final liberation of cities is a living example before us. It could establish its hegemony over the national-liberation struggle through the Communist Party, without a political general strike and armed uprising as the exclusive method as our polit bureau holds to be.

Lastly, our polit bureau clean forgets that our country is a colonial country as distinct from developed capitalist country. This factor has a number of consequences which can be forgotten only by political bankrupts. Besides its bearing on the class strategy, this has its influence on the fighting strategy of the proletariat. Firstly, the agrarian revolution as the axis of the colonial revolution has its dis-

tinguishing feature from that of an advanced capitalist country. The world capitalist crisis first and foremost bursts forth as an agrarian crisis in the colony, the agrarian appendage of imperialist economy. Overwhelming majority of the people—more than 90 per cent—live in the countryside, closely bound with and largely dependent upon agrarian economy. The peasantry is the main ally of the proletariat and the chief force in the agrarian-democratic revolution. The small numerical strength of the proletariat concentrated in the cities while on the one hand affording scope and possibility for the imperialists and their native lackeys to keep it under their military grip and occupation, on the other also provides the fighting proletariat and its party the scope to fall back on the vast countryside, which does not entirely depend for the existence on cities and where the modern communications to facilitate the enemy's military movements are far less developed and where liberation bases can be established and liberation armies can be nourished through prolonged armed resistance linked with the agrarian revolution. The polit bureau exactly by ignoring this colonial feature failed to assess the advantages and disadvantages objectively placed before the fighting proletariat and the people and landed in all mechanical, dogmatic and sectarian forms of struggle and fighting strategy.

However to understand this path, correctly described as the "Chinese path", as a smooth, happy, cement-road-like path spells bankruptcy for a revolutionary. This is a hard and difficult path which calls forth from the revolutionary forces immense sacrifices, undying heroism, dogged tenacity, superhuman organisational abilities and abounding faith in the cause of people's democracy and socialism. But there is no other easier path for success in the struggle for national liberation and people's democracy in the conditions present today. Sectarian rejection or reformist-opportunist interpretation of this 'path' only leads to disaster and liquidation of the revolution. That is how matter stands.

Thus it once and for all bars all doors for opportunist distortion of the political line, which by seizing a phrase here and word there attempts to nullify it. The earlier formulations in Liu Shao-chi's speech and the editorial of *For a Lasting Peace, For a People's Democracy* of 27 January 1950, such as "this path should be taken by the people of many colonial and dependent countries and the formation of liberation armies 'whenever necessary' internal conditions allow it", etc., were seized upon by both the trends of left and right deviationists for their own purposes. But their ingenious arguments that the term "many colonial" countries does not imply our country also and that the clause "whenever internal conditions permit" indicates that the present internal conditions of India do not permit such a course, etc., are now proved to be nothing but a hoax and a fraud.

The failure of the polit bureau to understand the present stage of the Indian revolution and how it has risen to new qualitative heights can only be explained in one way. Its understanding of world capitalist crisis and revolutionary upsurge is only formal and skindeep. Or else, how can it dare to characterise the timely and valuable suggestion of Andhra secretariat as "only an attempt to appear heroic" and as "a dressing for reformism"?

As a matter of fact, if this experience of the Andhra secretariat—the experience of Telangana—had been transmitted to other provinces the situation in our country today would have been totally different. Take for example Kerala. Why is it that there has set in a stagnation in the movement and its advance during this period in Kerala? Do we not all know that the Kerala movement, by the time of the second congress, was a movement more advanced in certain respects than that of Andhra? Its state people's movement which enacted the mighty struggles of Vayalar and Punnapra, is older than that of Telangana. Its strong base (stronger than in any other province) among the poor peasantry and the working class, its mass Communist Party membership of 15,000 steeled in many a

battle, though of course fettered by our old reformist policies are facts of common knowledge to us all. The present stagnation and the deadlock in provincial committee secretariat is to be primarily accounted for by the failure of the polit bureau in guiding it with proper forms of struggle. If only the Telangana experience were grasped by the polit bureau and proper lessons drawn and given to Kerala, that province today would have been another challenging base of guerillas against the collaborationist government. Kerala would have been neither paralysed as it is now, nor Telangana guerilla base would have been left more or less isolated as is the case now. This is not the proper place to make a full detailed assessment of the damage caused to the revolutionary movement in India by the situation. We will deal with it separately.

Again the Andhra secretariat has pointed out that the Chinese revolution has had to traverse a different path from that of the Russian revolution, characterising the former as extending from the rural side to the cities and the latter from the cities to the rural side. Without going into exhaustive discussion on this subject here, i.e. what historical conditions have been responsible for deciding the respective courses, etc. one must take note of the peculiarities characterising each.

How does the polit bureau react to this? After delivering a long lecture, it sums up its position thus: "Why had the Chinese to go through the protracted civil war? Just because the leadership of the Chinese Communist Party, at times, failed to fight for the hegemony of the proletariat, for bringing the majority of the masses in alliance and under the leadership of the proletariat, because it followed tactical policies which led to a disaster" (*Tactical Line*).

And in support of this contention it goes on to give passage after passage from the colonial theses of the Communist International, where the mistakes of the Chinese Communist Party are detailed.

This explanation by the polit bureau of the protracted

Chinese civil war is indeed staggering. The leadership of the Communist Party of India has miserably failed not only in the past to learn from the mistakes of the Chinese Communist Party, as was specifically instructed by the Communist International, but also now it refuses to learn from the rich experiences of the Chinese revolutionary struggle.

How did the Communist International instruct us?

"Living, concrete, historical dialectics, such as were demonstrated by the now completed first period of the bourgeois-democratic revolution in China, will give to the communists, especially those working in the colonial countries, a valuable experience which it is necessary to study diligently in order to draw the correct conclusions, especially from the mistakes committed in the course of communist work in the colonies" (Colonial Theses of the Communist International).

What are the mistakes committed by the Chinese Communist Party? As pointed out by the Communist International, they are, in a nutshell: the Communist Party's failure to develop the agrarian movement, its failure in developing independent actions of the revolutionary masses, its failure to struggle for its hegemony and tailing sometimes behind the Kuomintang bourgeoisie and sometimes behind the Wuhan wing of the Chinese petty bourgeoisie.

Has the Communist Party of India "studied diligently" and learnt from these mistakes? If so, how are we to explain the entire reformism that has been practised by us and which landed us finally in support of the collaborationist Nehru government till the second party congress? We ignobly failed, this is a fact. Now the line chosen by the polit bureau to explain the Chinese path undoubtedly has led and will lead to refusal to learn from the rich experience of the Chinese path, the path they have carved out at the cost of inhuman suffering, enormous sacrifice in life, blood and tears. To explain away the entire Chinese path by means of the mistakes

the Chinese Communist Party has committed is scandalous and vulgarisation to the extreme.

When we see this we are reminded of Stalin's remarkable, enunciation, while answering the slanderous attack by the "left opposition" on the Communist International.

Of course there is one difference. Our polit bureau tries to explain the causes for the protracted nature of the Chinese civil war, whereas the opposition in the Communist International whom Stalin was addressing had attempted to explain the defeat of the Chinese revolution by the supposed wrong tactics of the Communist International given to the Chinese Communist Party. To put it sharply, the positions taken by both, our polit bureau and the "left"-opposition in the Communist International will be thus:

Because of the wrong tactics given by the Communist International to the Chinese Communist Party, the Chinese revolution was defeated—says the "left"-opposition.

Because the Chinese Communist Party has committed a number of tactical mistakes leading to failure to establish proletarian hegemony, the revolution was defeated at the time, and this in turn led to protracted civil war—says the polit bureau.

Is there any real difference between both the analyses? Apparently it may look to be. But, actually, they both start from the same premise and both of them analyse the causes for the defeat in the same manner. According to one, but for the tactical mistakes of the Communist International, the Chinese revolution would have been a success. According to other, but for the tactical mistakes of the Chinese Communist Party, the Chinese civil war would not have been protracted, i.e. the revolution would have succeeded then and there alone. Here the malady is, as Stalin says, to forget the decisive factors, i.e. the existing concrete correlation of class forces.

Thus the Chinese path is a path which has become his-

torically inevitable and not, as some try to explain away, the result of a failure here and a tactical mistake there.

One must pause here and ask: Does the polit bureau's analysis go to educate or miseducate the party ranks?

It is precisely because the polit bureau has failed to understand the whole set of class relations that have led to the Chinese path, it has refused to appreciate the new in it and apply it in concrete to the revolutionary struggle in India, that it has pitched its tent on, and refused to budge from, the slogans of general strike and countryside armed uprising. For communists it is neither permissible to cling only to the set forms nor make any unconditional repudiation of any of them.

In the words of Lenin:

"Right-doctrinairism persisted in recognising only the old forms, and became totally bankrupt, for it did not perceive the new content. Left-doctrinairism persists in unconditional repudiation of certain old forms and fails to see that the new content is forcing its way through all and sundry forms, that it is our duty as communists to master all forms, to learn how, with maximum rapidity, to supplement one form with another, to substitute one for another, and to adapt our tactics to every such change not called forth by our class or by our efforts" (*"Left-Wing" Communism*).

Thus it becomes necessary that the communists should assess the complete objective conditions in deciding which form of struggle in which situation becomes either dominant (i.e. the main form), or subsidiary, or out of place, etc. Otherwise it would be undialectical pedantry and not Marxism.

Our polit bureau, in its document *Tactical Line*, had gone whole hog in attacking the very conception of the Chinese path, and summarily dismissed it as nothing new. But the editorial of *For a Lasting Peace, For a People's Democracy* 27 January 1950 points out thus:

"Analysing the conditions of the victory of the Chinese people's liberation revolution, Liu Shao-chi, vice-presi-

dent of the World Federation of Trade Unions, in his speech to the Peking trade-union conference of the countries of Asia and Oceania, stated: 'The path taken by the Chinese people... is the path that should be taken by the people of many colonial and dependent countries in their struggle for national independence and people's democracy'."

The polit bureau not only sat unconcerned and unworried for months after the speech of Liu Shao-chi had appeared in the organ of the Cominform bureau but, even after the editorial in the organ had pointed out as above, it has not a word of selfcriticism to say in its latest document on this subject! Enough harm has already been done. Is it not imperative that the central committee considers this question in all its seriousness afresh?

## VI. THE NATIONAL QUESTION

In the period of reformism, the party pursued the grossly servile policy of tailism to the bourgeoisie all along the line. The manifestations of this on the national question were particularly disastrous. In the name of "selfdetermination", we tailed behind the communal chauvinism and separatism of the Muslim League leaders and supported their reactionary disruptive slogans at every stage. Thereby we brought grist to the mill of the imperialist policy of divide and rule and its culmination in the religious-communal partition of India. Not only this, we extended our support to the reactionary communalism of the Scheduled Castes Federation leadership and also came out with the pernicious slogans of "separate electorates", "separate settlements", etc. for the untouchable—also in the name of 'selfdetermination'!

It is well known what havoc our policy in this period on the national question caused.

The second party congress generally corrected these



mistakes of ours and called for correct application of the slogan of selfdetermination of nationalities.

But instead of doing this, the polit bureau since the second party congress has gradually advanced the left-sectarian slogan of "selfdetermination of toilers" as against the selfdetermination of nationalities. It did this in the name of "fighting reformism and bourgeois nationalism" and in the name of "proletarian internationalism". In pursuance of this left-sectarian line, the polit bureau in effect opposed all national movements, movements for linguistic-cultural provinces and dissolution of feudal states (as in Hyderabad) and by advocating in all cases (as in the case of Kashmir) joining the Indian Union by itself as the demand of the Communist Party. This policy in effect meant nothing else but subservience to big-bourgeois chauvinism, lending support to the policy of national oppression pursued at the dictates of imperialism by the Nehru-Patel government representing the interests of the dominant Gujarati-Marwari big bourgeoisie.

Here we are not going into all details of a complete picture of the national question, but only into those aspects that are necessary to bring out sharply the worst mistakes committed by the polit bureau in this period.

India is a multinational country. British imperialism retarded the growth of the nations and national entities by pursuing a policy of divide and rule in order to suppress the peoples of all nationalities that had either grown up or were growing. It created artificial administrative divisions based upon splitting up the nationalities and propped up feudal princedom in the native states for the suppression of the people (many of these princely states themselves being composed of various nationalities being split up and divided) like Hyderabad, Mysore, Travancore and Cochin. It created excluded and partially-excluded areas to suppress the tribal peoples and to stifle their growth into fullfledged nations. It fanned and provoked communal conflict and riots culminating in the infamous partition under the Mountbatten award.

The same policy is being carried forward by the Indian big bourgeoisie installed into power by British imperialism as its junior partner. Not satisfied with virtually reducing the status and powers of the provinces under the new constitution to that of a district board or municipality, it has refused the demand for linguistic provinces even under such a setup. It has stifled the growth of all nationalities by saving and supporting feudal princedom in the states and by refusing the demand for dissolution of the states (like Hyderabad, Travancore-Cochin, Mysore, etc.) and their component parts being rejoined to the respective linguistic areas, etc. It continues the oppression of the tribal and semitribal people by refusing to grant them autonomous regions.

The demand for autonomous linguistic provinces and for the dissolution of the states merging their component parts in the respective linguistic areas (Vishal Andhra, Samyukta Karnataka, Samyukta Maharashtra, United Kerala, etc.) is a progressive democratic anti-imperialist demand. It is a demand directed against the imperialist-feudal-bigbourgeois combine.

The chauvinistic reactionary elements of various nationalities in India are trying to utilise these national movements to serve their own reactionary purposes. As against this, it is the task of the Communist Party to seize the initiative and lead these movements as part of the general struggle for national independence and people's democracy. This is how proletarian hegemony in the national question is exercised.

As against this, what does the polit bureau's policy amount to?

The crassest instance of it can be seen in the slogans it gave regarding the demand for dissolution of Hyderabad state and rejoining its component national parts to the respective linguistic areas.

Let us examine the arguments of the polit bureau.

According to the polit bureau, firstly, it is "nothing but a paraphrase of the bourgeois version of bringing the state

administration to the level of provincial administration". Elsewhere, in the same document, it is characterised as a "mere paraphrase of Sardar Patel's slogan of bringing the state to the administrative level of provinces".

Such an argument is nothing but the most shamefaced attempt to screen the archreactionary policy of the Nehru-Patel government with regard to the nizam and the feudal order in Hyderabad state represented by him. It is another face of the same old bankrupt discredited thesis of the polit bureau that the bourgeoisie is "compelling" feudalism in the state to "reform to its advantage" and so on.

What is the reality? The Nehru-Patel government has rejected the demand for liquidation of the nizam's order and the disintegration of Hyderabad state. It is consolidating the nizam's rule and the rotten feudal order in the state and continuing the policy of national oppression of the different nationalities in the state. It is trying to throw dust into the eyes of the people over this oppressive policy by talking of "free elections", a "consembly" for the state and so on. And here comes our polit bureau—virtually defending this policy from another end, from the 'revolutionary' end and saying that in so far as "immediate practical action" is concerned, the big bourgeoisie is already doing what is wanted by those who demand the disintegration of the state and rejoining of the different linguistic areas of the state to the respective provinces; that it is already "raising the state administration to the level of provincial administration"; and so on.

Could there be a more shameless apologia for the big bourgeoisie, for the Nehru-Patel predatory policy, than such an 'ultraleftist' stand? It is the polit bureau's policy in fact that is nothing but a paraphrase of Sardar Patel's slogan.

Secondly, the polit bureau condemns the slogan as "only satisfying the rich peasant and whetting his appetite for procuring land". Hence once again is expressed nothing but the crudest and most bankrupt left-sectarianism. The most important driving force of the various movements

of the nationalities is the peasantry fighting under the leadership of the working class. This is what the Lenin-Stalin principles on the national question teach us, this is what is meant by Stalin's dictum that the "national question is a peasant question". But our ultrarevolutionary polit bureau dismisses all this by saying that the slogan "only satisfied the rich peasant and whets his appetite for procuring land"—refusing even to learn from life and to see how the slogan of dissolution of the state, etc. is a mobilising slogan that rouses vast masses of the common people of all the three nationalities.

One has only to contrast this bankrupt understanding of the polit bureau with the brilliant and pregnant formulation Balabushevich makes in connection with the Telangana struggle; "It was the combination of the anti-feudal and the national struggle which conditioned the particular acuteness of the peasant struggle in Telangana." A combination 'which—we may add—the polit bureau tried its best to obstruct and hamper by its crude left-sectarian poohpoohing of the national question.

Finally, the polit bureau reaches the limit of left-sectarian heights by declaring off-hand that the slogan "effectively sidetracks attention from a united fight against the Indian Union administration", that it "gives a free charter to the Indian Union administration", etc. This is nothing but the cheapest demagoguery. The slogan far from "sidetracking" in fact focuses and strengthens a united fight against the Nehru-Patel regime. It is a weapon of the most effective and concentrated fight against the Indian Union administration, in as much as it enables the combination of the antifeudal and national struggle; it is the polit bureau's slogan that gives a free charter to the Nehru-Patel administration.

To cover up its bankrupt policy, the polit bureau resorts to statements such as: "Those who think that joining the territories to the province automatically eliminates feudalism are wrong." Whom is the polit bureau accusing of thinking such things? The Andhra secretariat—which has

been placed at the head of the armed struggle against the nizam for the last four years—certainly cannot be accused of such a fatuous thing. In fact these and similar words of the polit bureau are only window dressing for its real policy—a policy of national nihilism—as is made clear by the opening words of the abovequoted statement—“Even when virtually it is said that the slogan to be realised as part of people’s democracy, in the present context, it plays a reactionary role.”

Such has been the polit bureau’s policy on one of the most important and crucial issues that have arisen on the national question during this period—and that too in connection with the great Telangana struggle.

The same line—the line of countering the demand for autonomous linguistic provinces and dissolution of states by advancing the left-sectarian slogan of “selfdetermination of toilers” as against selfdetermination of nations—was virtually advocated by the polit bureau in regard to the movements for United Kerala, Samyukta Karnataka, Samyukta Maharashtra, etc. Members of the polit bureau have consistently poohpooed the Vishal Andhra slogan and accused the Andhra secretariat of “small-nation chauvinism”, of “kulak nationalism”, and so on, in supporting and consistently fighting for Vishal Andhra slogan. The polit bureau did this in the name of fighting “bourgeois nationalism” of the bourgeoisie of the oppressed nationalities.

Has the polit bureau by its policy fought “bourgeois nationalism” of the oppressed nationalities? On the contrary: In the course of the last two years, during which the movement for linguistic provinces came forward and gained ground considerably, the polit bureau’s policy, wherever it was applied, only led to the entire initiative in this movement passing unchallenged into the hands of the bourgeoisie of the oppressed nationalities and helped it to utilise this movement for its own reactionary purpose.

In fact the polit bureau has not combated small-nation chauvinism. All it has done is to aid and strengthen the reactionary chauvinism and national oppression of the ruling big bourgeoisie, the agent of Anglo-American imperialism.

The polit bureau member from Andhra in his letters to the general secretary as early as the middle of 1949 brought to his notice the growing acuteness of the national question, of the question of linguistic provinces and emphasised the urgency of the workingclass party seizing the initiative on this question from the hands of the bourgeois elements who were diverting it into wrong and reactionary channels. But the polit bureau turned a deaf ear to all this—and never learnt anything from what actually life was demonstrating with such force.

All the erroneous theories on the national question were developed by the general secretary in a document written by him into a complete system on the basis of the wrong anti-Stalinist theory that "all national movements are bourgeois movements" and that therefore only the slogan of "selfdetermination of toilers" is a valid slogan. This document was sent to all members of the central committee as an inner-CC document for discussion. Fortunately, however, before matters proceeded further, the line of the Cominform bureau came and saved the party from further debacle.

The slogan of the polit bureau of "selfdetermination of toilers"—pitted against the slogan of selfdetermination of nations—is nothing new in the history of distortion and revisionism of Marxism-Leninism. While drawing up and discussing the new programme prior to the eighth congress of the Bolshevik Party in 1919, Bukharin had advanced precisely this slogan and Lenin had attacked and smashed it in the course of the report he delivered at the congress, in the following words :

"I have to say the same thing with regard to the national question. Here too the wish is father to the thought with Bukharin. He says that it is impossible to admit the right

of nations to selfdetermination. A nation implies the bourgeoisie together with the proletariat. And are we, the proletarians, to recognise the right to selfdetermination of the despised bourgeoisie? That is absolutely incompatible! Pardon me, it is compatible with what actually exists. If you eliminate this, the result will be sheer fantasy...

"I want to recognise only the right of the toiling classes to selfdetermination', says Bukharin. That is to say, you want to recognise something that has not been achieved in a single country except Russia. That is ridiculous...

"We say that account must be taken of the stage at which the given nation finds itself on the way from medievalism to bourgeois democracy, and from bourgeois democracy to proletarian democracy. That is absolutely correct. All nations have the right to selfdetermination... The vast majority, most likely nine-tenths of the population of the earth, are on the way from medievalism to bourgeois democracy and from bourgeois democracy to proletarian democracy. This is an absolutely inevitable course. More cannot be said because it would be wrong: because it would not be what actually exists. To reject the selfdetermination of nations and insert the selfdetermination of the toilers would be absolutely wrong because this statement of the question does not reckon with the difficulties, with the zigzag course which differentiation within a nation takes...

"Our programme must not speak of the selfdetermination of the toilers, because that would be wrong. It must speak of what actually exists. Since nations are at different stages on the road from medievalism to bourgeois democracy and from bourgeois democracy to proletarian democracy, this thesis of our programme is absolutely right. With us there have been very many zigzags on this road. Every nation must secure the right to selfdetermination and that will make the selfdetermination of the toilers easier."

All the above was said by Lenin while concretely speaking of selfdetermination in relation to countries like Finland, Poland and Germany. Lenin attacked the slogan of selfdetermination of toilers and justified the slogan of selfdetermination of nationalities—even in the context where the proletarian revolution had already succeeded in Russia and when the question of selfdetermination arose concretely in relation to countries like Finland, Poland and Germany where a revolutionary situation for socialist revolution was fast maturing. If that be so, how much more are Lenin's words applicable to the situation in India today—a semicolonial country where the bourgeois-democratic revolution in the main is yet to be completed?

The slogan of the polit bureau of selfdetermination of toilers proceeds from the anti-Leninist, anti-Stalinist premises that "all national movements are bourgeois movements". The polit bureau applies this premise to its trotskyite understanding of the postwar period being dominated by the one exclusive contradiction, namely, that between capital and labour, between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, and arrives at this conclusion by the following syllogism.

All national movements are bourgeois movements.

All bourgeois movements in this period are reactionary.

Hence all national movements in this period are reactionary.

Hence only the slogan of selfdetermination of toilers remains.

This whole thing is nothing but a piece of the crudest trotskyist monstrosity.

The polit bureau's premise itself is a trotskyist distortion of Leninism. Lenin and Stalin teach us that the national question is in essence a peasant question. though anti-imperialist sections of the bourgeoisie may also participate in the national movements, and even lead them for a time. Therefore the Lenin-Stalin doctrine of prole-



tarian hegemony in the democratic revolution and of fighting alliance of the proletariat with the peasantry demands that the working class should seize the leadership on the national question and consolidate its alliance with the peasantry. On this question by combining the anti-imperialist, antifeudal struggle with the national struggle into on stream of people's democratic revolution.

Here is how Stalin assesses the significance of the national question in the epoch of imperialism and proletarian revolution.

"The national problem is a part of the general problem of the proletarian revolution, a part of the problem of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

"The question presents itself as follows: Are the revolutionary possibilities latent in the revolutionary liberation movement of the oppressed countries already exhausted or not; and if not, is there any hope, any ground to expect that these possibilities can be utilised for the proletarian revolution, that the dependent and colonial countries can be transformed from a reserve of the imperialist bourgeoisie into a reserve of the revolutionary proletariat, into an ally of the latter?

"Leninism replies to this question in the affirmative, that is, to the effect that it recognises the latest revolutionary capabilities of the national-liberation movement of the oppressed countries, and to the effect that it is possible to use these for the purpose of overthrowing the common enemy, for the purpose of overthrowing imperialism. The mechanics of the development of imperialism, the imperialist war and the revolution in Russia wholly confirm the conclusions of Leninism on this score.

"Hence the necessity for the proletariat to support—resolutely and actively to support—the national-liberation movement of the oppressed and dependent peoples" (*Problems of Leninism*).

The above gives the correct understanding of the national question—and not the trotskyist thesis of the polit bureau.

The bankruptcy of the polit bureau's trotskyite thesis—that all the possibilities of the national question have been exhausted since the present period is the era of the straight fight of capital versus labour on a world scale and nothing else—and the correctness of the Stalinist analysis is demonstrated with striking force by the course of the second world war itself. During the second world war, Europe itself—comprising advanced and medium capitalist countries—was the arena of a great liberation struggle of a number of nations against the hitlerite yoke, a struggle in which, for a period, communist parties closely linked the national-liberation struggle with the struggle against the capitalists and landlords, discredited by capitulation to hitlerite Germany or collaboration with it—and with the struggle for the overthrow of the rule of the capitalists and landlords.

Zhdanov, in the report he delivered at the nine parties' conference in September 1947, stressed the importance of the national-liberation aspect of the struggle in the period following the second world war, when American imperialism has risen to take the place of hitler-fascism. Zhdanov said as follows:

"Communists must support all the really patriotic elements who do not want their countries imposed upon, who want to resist their enthrallment to foreign capital and to uphold their national sovereignty. The communists must be the leaders in enlisting all antifascist and freedom-loving elements in the struggle against the new American expansionist plans for the enslavement of Europe."

If such continues to be the potency of the national question in the present period even in the case of the advanced capitalist countries of Europe, how much more is it so in the case of a semicolonial country like India where the people's democratic revolution "cannot but bear in the first place an anti-imperialist and antifeudal character?" (Zhukov).

Thus both the polit bureau's premise and its conclusions

on the national question are nothing but a repudiation of Marxism-Leninism.

The policy of the polit bureau on the national question has had very harmful consequences for the movement during the last two years. We are here pointing out only a few of these. In a period when the movements for Samyukta Maharashtra, Samyukta Karnataka, United Kerala etc. were rising and gaining ground the policy of the polit bureau left the party paralysed and helpless to make any impact on these movements and put them on correct rails, and thus gave the bourgeoisie a free hand to sabotage them. In the case of Vishal Andhra movement, whatever the Andhra committee was able to do was in spite of the line of the polit bureau—and taking advantage of certain formal loopholes left in it.

Similarly this policy of the polit bureau led to the party taking the imperialist Mountbatten partition for granted: failing to effectively expose its evil effects and the manner in which imperialism was utilising Indo-Pakistan conflict to strengthen its grip on both the states; and failing to build the unity of the democratic movements in the Indian Union and Pakistan as the indispensable condition for the liberation of both these dominions from imperialist oppression.

It has become of utmost importance today to root out all these mistakes and to adopt a correct policy on the national question based on Marxism-Leninism, because the national question assumes tremendous importance in the present stage of our people's democratic revolution in India. The ruling clique not only continues the imperialist policy of national oppression: but in order to disrupt the democratic movement and retain its monopolistic domination incites national conflicts all round—between Bengalis and Biharis, between Tamilians and Andhras, between Bengalis and Assamese. and so on. It pursues a policy of racial, communal and national discrimination all round. And above all the imperialist policy of divide and rule continues in a new form after partition—by fanning

and utilising Indo-Pakistan conflict in order to strengthen its own grip on both the states.

As against this a correct policy on the national question will alone enable us to fight effectively against the disruptive policy of the imperialist-feudal-bigbourgeois combine and to smash the Mountbatten partition. The fight for selfdetermination of the various nationalities and the tribal peoples of India and Pakistan is integrally linked up with the struggle for national liberation from imperialist oppression. It must be led by the working class and the Communist Party.

Correct national policy towards the tribal and semi-tribal peoples and their demand for autonomous regions is absolutely essential in the present period of extending armed struggle and formation of armed guerilla bases leading to liberation bases and formation of liberation armies. The people of such areas in suitable cases shall have the right to secede from the state by a democratic verdict.

It is the combination of the antifeudal with the national struggle that will give the most effective striking power to the revolutionary forces, taking to the new forms of struggle linked up with agrarian revolution in the present period. That is the lesson of Telangana.

The Communist Party must stand and fight for the equality of all nations and seminationalities growing as nations, equal development of their language, culture and economic life, selfdetermination of all nationalities and seminationalities to the point of secession, unity of all these nationalities into a voluntary union.

The Lenin-Stalin principle of national equality and self-determination has been applied with brilliant success in the USSR and constitutes the model for the solution of national, racial and communal conflicts in all countries. It is by correct application of these principles alone that we in our country can achieve the solution of communal and racial conflicts, the equality of all nationalities, elimination of religious-communal division of peoples, and finally, unification of India and Pakistan into a voluntary union

of people's democratic republics. The people's democracy in the Indian subcontinent can be realised only by overthrowing both the reactionary regimes of India and Pakistan.

## VII. ATTACK ON COMRADE MAO TSE-TUNG

This selfcritical note however will be incomplete without touching on the formulations of the polit bureau attacking Mao Tse-tung.

It is evident for anybody who has read the *Tactical Line* that our polit bureau has delivered a pungent and arrogant attack on the leader of the Chinese Communist Party and his views contained in the pamphlet *New Democracy*. How did this find a place in the document of the polit bureau? Perhaps, the polit bureau might have felt that without attacking the formulations of Mao Tse-tung on new democracy it could not brush aside the issues raised by the Andhra secretariat, which extensively quoted from Mao Tse-tung's writings in support of its stand.

We now proceed to discuss not the propriety or otherwise of attacking a brother party in the way the polit bureau has done; we confine ourselves to its political aspect, i.e. what wrong politics on the part of the polit bureau led to such attacks, what harm it did to the revolutionary movement in India, and what effect it had on the bonds of solidarity with the fighting Chinese people and their party, the Communist Party.

It is one thing if the polit bureau were to correct the Andhra secretariat, which in its overenthusiasm for the victorious Chinese struggle and for the glorious party and its leader had said that the contents of Mao Tse-tung's *New Democracy* are a "new discovery", etc. That would have been correct. But what the polit bureau has done is not that. It has seized this opportunity and has gone full length in attacking downright the pamphlet

on *New Democracy* by Mao Tse-tung. Does it attack and criticise it in a straightforward and bolshevik manner? No, it does not. It indulges in insinuations and sly suggestions which deride the pamphlet *New Democracy* downright. The manner and method it has chosen is not in good taste for any Marxist. And, in this case, for no less a body than the leadership of the Communist Party of India.

It pretends not to sit in judgment over Mao Tse-tung's *New Democracy*. But in reality it made all or nearly all remarks which constitute enough judgment on Mao.

Let us examine how it is so.

What does the polit bureau mean when it says "singularly enough there was no reference to this new addition to Marxism in the conference of nine parties", and that "one of the most authoritative conferences of Marxists has not thought fit to recommend" the pamphlet *New Democracy*? Is it not plain that this amounts in substance to nothing but saying that Mao's *New Democracy* is rejected by world communist thought?

Let us ask: Was the nine parties' conference convened with the sole purpose of, or was it the occasion to, assessing various theoretical works and recommend some and reject others? Not only as there no reference to or recommendation of Mao's *New Democracy* at the nine parties' conference, there were a lot of Marxist theoretical works for which there was equally no reference or recommendation at the conference. Does the polit bureau mean that all that was not referred to or recommended should be taken as only condemned there?

This method of borrowing the name of the nine parties' conference in aid of one's own dubious reading is anything but bolshevik.

The polit bureau says that the Andhra secretariat should have thought "ten times before recommending" such pamphlets as *New Democracy*. True, indeed. But the polit bureau must have thought hundred times before coming out with open attacks on Mao Tse-tung and his formula-

tions, when the Communist Party of China under the leadership of Mao is conducting such historic struggle as the Chinese revolution.

The polit bureau says "such claims of discoveries have proved too often to be thin cloaks for revisionism (Tito, Browder, etc.)". It is patent on the face of it for anybody to see that what the polit bureau is talking here is that the pamphlet *New Democracy* is under fire here. Is not the polit bureau placing Mao Tse-tung's *New Democracy* on a par with Browder's reformism and Tito's trotskyism? And it is to be noted that this stuff is solemnly written when the whole imperialist press is slandering Mao that he is an 'Eastern Tito', etc.!

The imperialists did it with the purpose of maligning the Communist Party of China and disrupting the solidarity of the world communist front. Our polit bureau drifts into assisting the slander.

Peculiarly enough, the polit bureau talks as though the formulations in *New Democracy* are in total variance with the formulations made in Zhdanov's report. There is nothing farther from truth than this. Is it not a fact that Mao's article on "Dictatorship of People's Democracy", which stuck to almost all the fundamentals he had made in his pamphlet *New Democracy*, is published not only in the organ of the information bureau of communist and workers' parties, but also was issued as a pamphlet in Moscow by the CPSU(B)? It is plain to anybody who is acquainted with the ABC of Marxism that it is not Mao's formulations that are at variance with Zhdanov's, but it is the interpretation of the polit bureau of the formulations of both Mao and Zhdanov which are totally wrong and at variance with Marxism-Leninism.

The polit bureau does not stop here.

While on the one hand saying that "this is not the place to sit in judgment on Mao", on the other it gets down to it in the name of answering the Andhra secretariat.

Would it be a harsh judgment if its long harangue is characterised as the cheapest demagoguery? But this is the

only characterisation any serious Marxist can make about it.

When and where is it that Mao made the formulations attacked by the polit bureau?—When the Chiang Kai-shek clique was trying to play on the instincts of private property, bent upon scaring away certain sections and classes from the united national front, when the minimum programme of the Chinese Communist Party was being distorted. Mao Tse-tung had clinched them and explained the minimum programme of new democracy.

Why did the Andhra secretariat quote it? Because it was facing the arguments that the struggle in the stage of new democracy is a struggle directed against "entire capital", and thus basically socialist, etc, and it had to say that it was not so. Not only was the fight not against "entire capital", but a sector of private capital would be encouraged and developed to a certain extent in order to advance the revolution. But the polit bureau neither bothers what the formulation of Mao actually means nor the context in which it was made and quoted.

Is this formulation of Mao Tse-tung reactionary? Has he anywhere spoken of the necessity of development of capitalism in China as the predominant form? Has he not exactly fought against such contention and abundantly made clear that it cannot be so in the present era? The polit bureau itself in its subsequent arguments in the *Tactical Line* quoted enough of Mao to that effect. Then how has the formulation of Mao become reactionary? The contention goes, as we understand, the phrase "development of capitalism" is said to be reactionary and it is only permissible, according to the polit bureau, to use the formulation "allowing private sector of capitalism" or "squeezing it out", etc. Whatever the confusion it makes or the play upon phrases shorn out of context, the point to be made clear here is that it is absolutely correct and in line with Lenin and Stalin and nothing is wrong with it.

Are the words "development of capitalism" taboo for



Marxists? No, it is not. Let us see from the quotations from no less persons than Lenin and Stalin.

"As a matter of fact, what is taking place in our country now is not a one-sided process of restoration of capitalism, but a two-sided process of development of capitalism and development of socialism—a contradictory process of struggle between the socialist elements and the capitalist elements, a process in which the socialist elements are overcoming the capitalist elements" (Stalin, *On the Problems of Leninism*).

"Without changing its essence, the proletarian state may permit free trade and the development of capitalism only within certain bounds, and only on the condition that the state regulates (supervises, controls, determines the forms and methods of etc.) private trade and private capitalism" (Lenin, "Role and Functions of Trade Unions under the New Economic Policy").

Any number of such formulations from the classics can be multiplied.

These are said in connection with the new economic policy practised for a while in Russia. Is this new economic policy only a Russian feature? No, it is wrong to think so. Here is what Stalin says:

"Can the capitalist countries, even the most developed of them, do without NEP in the transition from capitalism to socialism? I think not. In one degree or another, the new economic policy, with its market ties, and the stabilisation of these market ties, will be absolutely indispensable for every capitalist country in the period of the dictatorship of the proletariat."

If such is the case, how is Mao wrong in his formulation when he is speaking of his country, where the production forces are far from developed and have been hindered by imperialist-feudal reaction? Does the above teaching of Stalin apply to China all the more or not? What Mao is speaking about is the new democratic republic and a planned economy for it, i.e. the new democratic economy. Either this plan must specifically include in it the pro-

tection and development of private sector of capital to a certain extent, or the plan ceases to be a plan if left to spontaneity.

Thus what Mao formulated is correct. It is not Mao's formulations that are counterrevolutionary, but the views of those who try to dispense away with NEP and development of capitalism that it implies, and advance the slogan of straight "squeezing away" of all capitalism—without reckoning with the realities—which are counterrevolutionary.

Before we assess the damage caused in the party ranks, let us point out the way in which the enemies have utilised this attack on Mao Tse-tung. The bourgeois press has played it up. The petty-bourgeois and socialist press in India has utilised it to discredit the party and its leadership in the eyes of the people, pitting the policies of the Communist Party of India against Mao and the Chinese Communist Party. Coming to the concrete experience in our own province, Andhra, enemies of the party and the gang of renegades have utilised this to discredit both the Communist Party of India and in particular the Andhra leadership.

That is in brief for the above.

The entire camp of lefts and genuine party sympathisers fell into big confusion with the release of this document to the press.

Lastly, coming to the party ranks, a few instances from our own experience will speak eloquently for themselves.

One district committee has sent round a circular note in which it wanted to draw attention of the cadre to the importance of the study of the international Marxist journals. In it, it notes that the *China Digest* is not of any importance and rarely some good articles may appear in it and hence the cadres need not bother with reading it regularly.

One important city district committee set for itself the task of scanning every line in the *China Digest* not with

the intention of learning from it but only to "discover" reformism in it.

One comrade (who for some time was a member of an area committee in Telangana) began to talk loosely of Mao as Tito, etc., and question not only his formulations, but even certain decisions of the Chinese people's consultative council.

Further, we have a number of reports of elements who began to run riot calling Mao names.

In a word, it has become very difficult for the Andhra secretariat to quote or cite anything from the Chinese communist literature that is reaching its hand.

Is further enumeration necessary?

And the fact has to be noted that all this happens in a province (Andhra) where Mao and the Chinese Communist Party are held in high esteem and love, and are the main inspiration behind the struggles in Telangana, for the Telangana way.

When such is the case with Andhra, one can very well guess the position in other provinces.

How wrongly the cadre was educated and how impossible it has become to imbibe the Chinese lessons and what an impediment it has all been!

How are we to account for all this except by the wrong education of the party by the polit bureau?

Is what is done in the best communist traditions? Evidently not.

Another interesting thing is to observe the way in which the mind of the general secretary was working.

In a letter dated 12 July 1949 to another member of the polit bureau (Adhikari), criticising him for the publication of the part in the *Tactical Line on Strategy and Tactics in the Communist* (in fact it was published in Bengali earlier) he writes: "Firstly, should you have come out with an attack on Mao's past formulations when China's leaders are swiftly changing their line and are bringing about changes of world historic importance? Even now, I would not like anything from Mao to be

uncritically published in our paper. Yet criticism at this stage—such sharp criticism to be made public, when Mao is heading changes of world historic significance, is wrong."

The general secretary in his make-believe observation finds that the Chinese Communist Party is changing its line and correcting its mistakes. Again it is a vain attempt to satisfy oneself that the polit bureau is right and the Chinese Communist Party is wrong.

The second point is, the general secretary has banned the publication of anything from Mao uncritically in our press. Of course this 'critical' attitude must be the reason why such an important contribution as the article on the "Dictatorship of People's Democracy" by Mao finds no place in our central party press, even though it did appear in the organ of the Cominform bureau!

Thus the polit bureau started with censoring Mao Tse-tung and ended by censoring the organ of the Cominform bureau itself.

This attitude of our polit bureau to the brother parties and their leaders is sharply criticised by Palme Dutt in his letter to a party member which was forwarded by the Andhra provincial committee to the polit bureau as early as 15 August 1949.

To quote from Palme Dutt's letter: "One last point I may make from one who has been a friend and helper to the Indian party from its earliest days. You are at present conducting a magnificent battle which we are following with deepest sympathy and admiration but we are a little concerned at the tendency shown at present in some documents to find fault with the majority of other communist parties, to find the British party wrong, the French party wrong, the Chinese party wrong, Mao Tse-tung wrong, etc. This tendency is not healthy one and if unchecked, could lead to the kind of outlook that has reached an extreme form in the Yugoslav party."

Is not this sharp but friendly criticism from Palme Dutt enough to make the polit bureau rethink seriously, and

have a retrospective glance at its writings and outlook? But the pity of it was, it was falling on deaf ears.

Now, before closing this topic, we want to point out sharply that it will not be enough to say that this attack was wrong. What we have to understand is that there is politics, very serious politics, behind this attack. To try to separate the attacks from the politics behind them is to deceive oneself.

It is the dangerous left-deviation on a series of issues on the part of the polit bureau that culminated in the stupid, abusive, uncomradely and harmful attack on Mao Tse-tung.

That is the crux of the matter.

#### VIII. CONCLUSION

We thus see that taking all the questions dealt with above—stage and strategy of the revolution, people's democracy, agrarian question, national question, question of tactics and forms of struggle and the Chinese path—the polit bureau represents a consistent left-sectarian system. The polit bureau produced a fullfledged trotskyite thesis of 'decolonisation' and of one-stage revolution in the form of the three documents—*On People's Democracy*, *On Agrarian Question*, and *Tactical Line*—nullified all the correct things and developed fully all the wrong things in the political thesis, threw overboard all the teachings of Lenin and Stalin and the Communist International on imperialism and colonial revolutions and on the national question, distorted Zhdanov's report, turned a blind-eye to the valuable articles of the brother parties, refused to learn anything from the rich experience of the national-liberation movement in China, and finally threw to the winds the principles of fraternal relations of world communist parties to the extent of open slander of Mao Tse-tung and the Chinese Communist Party.

. In this document we have confined ourselves to a general critique of the political line of the polit bureau embodied in its three documents (summed up above). We have not gone into the question of party organisation and the titoite organisational methods pursued by the polit bureau nor into details about the slogans given by the polit bureau at different times for the various mass front (trade union, kisan, student, women, jails, etc.). Without this, no doubt, the document is incomplete. But this incompleteness as well as some of the other shortcomings which this document may have are due to the following unavoidable circumstances, circumstances beyond our control.

It was by the middle of 1 June 1949 that the majority of the Andhra secretariat had come to the conclusion that all the three polit bureau documents were totally on the wrong lines and were grave departures from Marxism-Leninism. A draft critical document was prepared by us at that time, but it was not fully finalised and the issue was shelved by us at that stage because by then we had begun to see the titoite organisational methods pursued by the polit bureau in practice and we were convinced that under those circumstances, the polit bureau, if it received the critical document of ours, would run amuck and by wielding the 'rod of discipline' against the Andhra provincial committee, might dissolve the secretariat and this disruptive step in the situation prevailing in Andhra and Telangana would spell disaster to the armed struggle that was being carried on there. The organisational practice of the polit bureau subsequently confirmed our fears. It was only with the Peking conference and Liu Shao-chi's opening speech at that conference that we got emboldened again and decided to carry on the innerparty struggle. Our plan was to prepare a full document in which political, organisational and different mass fronts, etc., would be critically reviewed and assessed. But due to the appearance to the editorial of *For a Lasting Peace, For a People's Democracy* and subsequent developments our time was taken up with other more pressing work and we could

not complete the document we had planned. Only the political part was completed and even that had to be completed in a hurried manner.

This will explain some of the shortcomings of this document, the most important of which being its incompleteness.

Regarding party organisation and the different mass fronts, we can only say here in a nutshell that the line of the polit bureau, and its practice, its trotskyite-titoite left-sectarian policy, slogans and organisational methods, have produced havoc and brought the party and the different mass fronts to the verge of liquidation, by the time of the open and direct political intervention by the Cominform bureau. If in spite of this the agrarian struggle continued and expanded in Telangana, Andhra and the hill border regions of Mymensingh, it is because comrades there learning from life experience itself and forced by it bypassed the polit bureau's sectarian documents and marched forward, in spite of them, not because of them. No doubt sometimes even in pursuit of a correct line a certain amount of disorganisation may occur in the mass front in the course of acute class struggles. But in such cases the disorganisation occurs despite a correct line. This is quite different however from what has happened in the course of the last two years. In this case the polit bureau's left-adventurist policy aggravated and accentuated the disorganisation and carried it to the point of virtual disruption and liquidation of the mass fronts and the party.

Left-sectarianism and its manifestations on every front have to be rooted out if the party is to march forward along the glorious path blazed out for us by our Chinese brethren. At the same time the history of our party during the last twenty years teaches us a most valuable lesson—a lesson which we never learnt so far due to our political immaturity and one which we can ignore today only at our peril. That lesson is: While fighting one deviation, beware of swinging to the other extreme, beware of step-

ping into the opposite type of deviation. While fighting one demon, beware of giving quarter to the other demon.

In the period prior to 1936, our party was guilty of gross left-sectarian errors, errors to which the seventh world congress of the Communist International drew our pointed attention (Wang Ming's report). In the subsequent period Joshi pretended to fight left-sectarianism, but what he did in reality was to take the party neck-deep into the bog of right-reformism. The second party congress rescued the party from this bog, but immediately came the new polit bureau and in the name of fight against right-reformism it took the party straight into the worst and crudest left-sectarianism and left-adventurism. It was because in the earlier period Joshi had never in reality fought left-sectarianism that it could rear its head immediately after the second party congress and assume such monstrous proportions within the last two years.

The polit bureau no more fought right-reformism in reality than Joshi had fought left-sectarianism in the earlier period; both of them while fooling the ranks and the people with seemingly revolutionary slogans in reality had only fought against the correct revolutionary line.

The history of the party teaches us:

Firstly: due to our political immaturity in the past, every time we have woken up to the danger of one type of deviation, we have only, in the name of fighting it, swung over to the other type of deviation.

Secondly: it is un-Marxian to say that one anti-Marxian deviation can be fought in reality with another anti-Marxian deviation. Both right-reformism and left-sectarianism carry on a mock fight against each other as long as there is no correct line, but as soon as a correct line is put forward both resort to attacking it from two opposite ends. In fact both right-reformism and left-sectarianism are only two forms of the same basic disease—bourgeois nationalism, the worst enemy of the proletarian party.

The social conditions of a colonial country like India in which our party operates makes our party particularly



vulnerable to the disease of bourgeois-nationalism. During the reformist period, bourgeois nationalism was never fought but on the contrary—it made monstrous inroads into the party and corroded its very vitals. Either the party fights out bourgeois-nationalism ruthlessly and roots it out and keeps constant vigilance against it; or bourgeois-nationalism counterattacks the party and destroys its very vitals, its social root being the petty-bourgeois composition of the party. It is the manifestation of this that is seen during the last two years in another form, in the form of the left-sectarian monster.

That is why today we must for the first time really assimilate the lessons taught by our party's history in the course of the last twenty years, the lessons taught by the history of the international communist movement. We must conduct a simultaneous fight on two fronts—both against right-reformism and left-sectarianism. We must guard the party against every deviation from Marxism-Leninism and towards bourgeois nationalism, be it of the right-reformist variety or of the left-sectarian variety.

In this connection, the following words of Stalin spoken in 1928 on the right- and left-deviations inside the CPSU(B) are full of meaning for us:

"You see, therefore, that both dangers, the 'left' and right, both these deviations from the Leninist line, the right and the 'left', lead to the same results, although from different directions.

"Which of these dangers is worse? In my opinion one is as bad as the other" ("The Right Danger in the CPSU-B").

It is necessary to give such a strong warning today about the simultaneous fight the party has to conduct on two fronts—both against the right- and the left-deviations. Left-sectarianism has run its full course and reached almost a climax in the course of the last two years. And now when we are correcting it and rooting it out, there is every likelihood that right-reformism, which the old polit bureau in reality never fought and which therefore had been lying dormant all the time, may raise its head again

under cover of fight against sectarianism and the havoc caused by it among the party ranks. This danger is real because so long as bourgeois-nationalism whose social roots inside our party are deep has not been fought successfully, it will raise its head in the form of that deviation which is less obvious at the moment and against which we are off our guard. The danger signal for this is already there in the fact that P. C. Joshi has come forward again with his old banner—this time with the thesis that India is not yet ripe for armed struggle.

That is why while not for a moment relaxing our fight against left-sectarianism, we must on no account permit the demon of right-reformism to raise its head again. We must simultaneously fight against both these demons ruthlessly. It is in essence a single fight—the fight against bourgeois-nationalism, which will find all forms of penetration into the party. This alone will enable us to go on the correct path, the revolutionary path of Marxism-Leninism.

The purpose of the above critique is to enable us to correct ourselves and rebuild the party and the mass movements as rapidly as possible so that they become fit instruments for discharging the great responsibility that devolves on our shoulders today.

The class enemies and their agents, the renegades from the party, are making every effort to capitalise the confusion inside the party and in the mass fronts today, in order to disrupt the party and try to split it, imperialism and the collaborationist bourgeoisie are feverishly attacking the party in order to try to liquidate it even before the party is able to get out of the present bog and on to the highway of the invincible Chinese path. The comments in the bourgeois press—that a struggle is going on inside the party today “between the followers of Ranadive and the followers of Joshi”—reveal the wish and the hope of the bourgeoisie and its efforts to create confusion that our party would, instead of getting on to the correct revolutionary path, once again go back to the old reformist line which would suit it perfectly.

The situation today is such that the ideological fight to clean out all the sectarian and reformist rubbish that has accumulated inside the party in the course of the last several years has to be carried out simultaneously with the immediate political-organisational tasks facing the party—of proceeding steadily to put the party on the rails of armed struggle in the countryside and rebuild the movement in the cities and workingclass centres on the basis of our new line and tactics. To forget that one cannot be carried out without the other, to forget that both have to be simultaneously fulfilled, would only lead to failure to snatch back the lost initiative and to liquidation of the party and of the revolutionary movement altogether.

We must fight "right" and "left" disruption and all the manifestations of the remnants of both the deviations and rebuild the party, suited to the conditions of strict illegality, firmly on the basis of Lenin-Stalin principles. We must conduct the innerparty struggle not in the vulgar spirit of bureaucratic liquidation as was done so far, but in the spirit of the Lenin-Stalin principles of bolshevisation. These principles mean the fullest innerparty democracy and the exercise of criticism and selfcriticism at the same time combined with iron discipline and strict centralisation. We must bolshevisize the party by deepening our knowledge of Marxism-Leninism and learning to apply it to our daily problems; by giving our cadres systematic political and military training so that they are able to lead the armed struggle with initiative, flexibility of tactics and firmness of purpose and determination in the face of difficulties; by careful selection and rapid promotion of the best-tested cadre from the ranks of the working class and toiling masses in particular to leadership; by ideological remoulding of the entire party ranks in the spirit of proletarian internationalism and unity of will and action of the world communist movement under the lead of Stalin. Such bolshevisation of the party alone will make it a worthy instrument to lead our country and our people on the glorious Chinese path.

We must reestablish fraternal relations with our brother parties and take immediate steps to restore in our party the principle of fraternal cooperation and brotherhood of the world communist movement which have been thoroughly disrupted during the earlier period of right-reformism and left-sectarianism.

Political guidance and assistance from the Cominform bureau and our brother communist parties is one of the surest guarantees that we shall be able to proceed on the correct path.

The mass organisations in the towns and the countryside—the trade unions, kisan sabhas, agricultural labourers' organisations, students', youth, women's organisations, etc.—which lie shattered and disrupted today thus reducing the party to utter isolation from the masses, have to be rebuilt anew, steadily and persistently. They are vital as transmission belts between the party and the nonparty masses, without them the party will lose its links with the masses and hence the instruments for carrying out its policy into action. The mass organisations must be built up in such a manner that they embody the unity of the toiling masses in the fight for their vital day-to-day demands and in the struggle for national liberation.

We must conduct the most patient and persistent fight to build up the unity of the working class and restore the disastrous split in the ranks of the trade-union movement. In this we must combine the most patient efforts to win over workers of all other sections and under the influence of all other parties and forge joint action with them while at the same time carrying on the most ruthless exposure, on principles, of all splitters like INTUC and Socialist Party leadership, etc. We must carry on work inside every organisation where the masses are to be found—hence the necessity to work inside all those reformist rival unions (INTUC, socialist) which have any mass influence.

We must fraternise with the ranks of the left parties, mass organisations, groups and individuals, to organise joint actions wherever and whenever possible and thus

build the democratic front as the anti-imperialist unity of all parties, groups and individuals willing to fight for national freedom and independence of the country. We must remember that under present conditions, a rapid process of disillusionment is taking place inside these left parties and with left elements in general, a process that creates very favourable conditions for building up such fraternisation and joint front.

We must learn to combine legal with illegal methods of struggle in such a flexible manner that the party is able to deliver the most telling and shattering blows on the enemy and achieve maximum results with minimum loss to itself.

We must develop the peace campaign as a part of the struggle for national liberation so that the peace movement and the national-liberation struggle go hand in hand, strengthening each other and delivering joint blows against Anglo-American imperialism and its native servitors.

Through the fulfilment of all those tasks alone can the party come forward as a real bolshevik party, as an instrument capable of fulfilling the great responsibility of leading the Indian revolution, in the footsteps of our great Chinese brothers, capable of leading the armed struggle, of taking our people on to the Chinese path, of building up the united front of all anti-imperialist classes, parties, groups, and individuals that are willing to fight for the national liberation of the country; capable of leading India in the victorious fight for people's democracy and socialism under the banner of the great world communist movement led by the invincible Soviet Union and its wise leader, Stalin.

## VI

### **A Note on the Present Situation in our Party**

#### *Why this Note*

We are submitting this note to the central committee of our party requesting it to circulate it in the ranks. It contains our views on the present political line and organisational decisions of the CC.

As can be seen from the note, we are in basic disagreement with the present line of the CC as formulated in various CC documents and also with the organisational methods adopted by the CC. We are of the opinion that the new line is only a variant of the same old line that worked havoc for two years and a half and brought the party to the verge of disaster, that it is a line based on complete distortion of the Cominform editorial of 27 January, that it is a line of liquidation of the party. Further, that not merely in its political policies but also in its organisational methods, the new CC is pursuing the same old path as before—bureaucratic 'reorganisation' of committees, taking in only those who agree with its present bankrupt policies and asking those who do not agree with them to 'stand aside'.

This document, popularly called Three P's Document, was prepared by Ajoy Ghosh (Prabodh Chandra), S. A. Dange (Prabhakar) and S. V. Ghatge (Purushottam) and circulated on 30 September 1950. A slightly abridged version is given here.

The new CC has issued many documents till now. There is not however a single document in which any attempt has been made to make an *analysis of the actual situation in the country*, an analysis which is obligatory for a Marxist party for working out a tactical line. Lenin taught us that the most characteristic feature of petty-bourgeois revolutionism is the failure to make "a strictly objective estimate of the class forces and their interrelation before undertaking any political action".

Lenin speaks of "any political action", our CC however works out a whole *political line* without any reference to the actual situation in the country, the state of the mass movement and our relation to that movement.

Secondly, the party documents give no idea of the state of the party, its strength, its influence, its mobilising and striking power vis-a-vis the other parties, its present links with the masses.

Thirdly, there is no mass policy in relation to any concrete issue facing our people.

Fourthly, the CC documents ignore the *specific tasks* set before us by the Cominform editorial of 27 January and work out a line which is a distortion of that editorial.

The CC documents therefore not only do not help to solve the present innerparty crisis. They do not even form the basis for fruitful discussion.

The old leadership talked about the 'Russian way', the new leadership talks about 'Chinese way'. The old leadership talked about 'revolutionary upsurge', the new leadership talks about 'civil war'. The old leadership drew parallels with Russia in the years of revolution, the new leadership draws parallels with China after 1927. Neither bothered to understand and analyse the situation in our own country.

Referring to a certain type of 'leader'. Stalin, in his "Comments on the Current Affairs in China" said:

"They do not understand that the main task of leadership at the present time, when communist parties have already grown up and become mass parties, consists in find-

ing out, mastering and skilfully combining the national peculiarities of the movement in each country, with the general principles of the Comintern in order to further and carry out in practice the basic objective of the communist movement.

"From this follows the attempt to stereotype the leadership of all countries. From this follows the attempt to apply mechanically certain general formulas regardless of the concrete conditions of the revolutionary movement in each country. From this follows the endless conflict between formulas and the revolutionary movement in each country, which is the essential outcome of the leadership of these unfortunate leaders."

"Concrete conditions of the revolutionary movement" in our country this is precisely what was ignored by the old PB. Demagogy, exaggeration and even blatant lies took the place of analysis. Inevitably what followed was a line of selfsatisfied sectarianism and blind adventurism. Same is being done again. This, in brief, is our criticism of the present line of the CC—a criticism which we have tried to elaborate in the following pages.

Today, led by the USSR and the great Stalin, the democratic camp is scoring new victories everywhere. The mighty movement for peace gathers momentum every day.

As a result of this development, the desperation of the imperialist warmongers has grown and today not merely war of aggression is raging on Korean soil but the menace of a world war has grown as at no period during the last five years. In such a period, our party remains in a state of paralysis, is unable to unify the people and even its own ranks. There could be no greater shame than this. no worse betrayal of our people and of the world democratic movement.

It is the task of each one of us to strain every nerve to end the present crisis in our party and this note we are placing before the CC and the ranks to point out where, in our opinion, the root of the crisis lies.



It can be seen that the note is mainly critical. It is not a political thesis. We have not tried to work out a new tactical line, we have only indicated broadly what the basis of such a line should be.

We have not made any specific proposal about the inquiry regarding the penetration of Tito agents into the party because the CC has already appointed a commission. The questionnaire prepared by the CC, however, seems to indicate that the proposed inquiry will be of a formal nature. We want to stress the need for a real searching inquiry and the careful checking up of the record of all comrades—especially those in leading committees and in the tech apparatus of the party. While we have no direct evidence, we think it inconceivable that all the disastrous policies of the last two and a half years could be just due to 'mistakes'. It could not be that the imperialists, while planting their agents in every party, paid no attention to India, which occupies such a vital position in presentday world.

#### A NOTE ON THE PRESENT SITUATION IN OUR PARTY

Events of the last three years have completely exposed the real nature of the independence that India won as the result of the compromise between British imperialism and the National Congress. Both in its foreign and in its national policies, the Nehru government has pursued the path of open subservience to the Anglo-American imperialists and the reactionary vested interests. It has become increasingly clear to all progressive elements, to millions and millions of our countrymen, that the so-called freedom has changed nothing, that conditions have worsened and are worsening every day, that the Congress has violated every pledge that it gave to the people.

Famine stalks the land. Starvation deaths are being reported from every part of the country. Rations have been

cut in several provinces to a level less than half of what is considered absolutely essential to keep a man in normal health. Prices have reached a height which makes it impossible for the common man to satisfy even his most elementary needs. Unemployment is growing fast all over the country. The procurement plans of the government and its bogus zamindari abolition measures have imposed fresh burdens on the peasantry. The government's 'land reforms' which leave feudalism intact and even reinforce it, its shameful deal with the princes in the name of merger and integration, its outrageous concessions to the capitalists on the plea of stimulating production, its bartering away of India's sovereignty in various deals with foreign monopoly interests, its support to Anglo-American imperialists on all major issues before the UNO and especially on the issue of Korea, its refusal to form linguistic provinces, its resort to lathicharges, bullets and imprisonment without trial—all these are fast destroying illusions about its 'national' and 'progressive' character and ranging increasing sections of people against it. The utter fiasco of the independence day celebrations this year—15 August—the poor gathering at meetings, the bitter comments made even in bourgeois papers who described these three years as years of broken pledges, of popular disillusionment and frustration, show the extent to which the isolation of the government has reached.

Out of these intolerable conditions and in the background of the growing disillusionment of the people has grown mass opposition to the present government and its policies. Innumerable strikes in all industrial centres, many of them fought with dogged determination for weeks together, strikes of teachers, clerks, employees of banks and commercial firms, peasant marches, peasant struggles rising to the level of uprising in Telangana, big student demonstrations many of which developed into militant clashes with the police, food riots, disintegration inside the Congress resulting in the formation of rival organisations in UP and several other places, defeats suffered by

the Congress in the Calcutta byelection and in the byelection in Bombay province and recently in Cochin-Travancore—such are some indications of this process. International developments, the growing might of the Soviet Union and the successful building of a new life in the people's democracies, the heroic struggle of the people of Vietnam and above all, the great victories of the Chinese people—are exercising profound influence on our people and helping the process of mass radicalisation. With their own eyes they see that while war-shattered China is, under the people's democratic government, stamping out the blackmarket and restoring its economy, while North Korea, in an incredibly short time, built anew its economy and acquired the strength which has amazed the whole world, India, which did not suffer even a fraction of the damage suffered by these countries in the war, is unable to restore even its prewar production and is in the throes of crisis, unemployment and mass starvation. The contrast between the two worlds, between the two systems, standing out sharper and clearer every day, is a tremendous revolutionising factor in our present situation.

The fast deepening agrarian crisis, further accentuated by the measures and policies of the government, have led to the numerous peasant actions all over the country.

Despite the hold of Gandhian traditions and despite the still considerable influence of the Congress among them, especially among the rich and middle peasants, the peasants are rapidly realising that they have been betrayed by the present government and are moving into action against the landlords, moneylenders and the police. This struggle, reaching the level of uprising in Telangana and various forms of armed struggle in Andhra and Hajang areas (East Pakistan), opens up new prospects before the Indian revolutionary movement and indicates the path along which it has to develop.

Telangana brings out in bold relief that our revolution is a people's democratic revolution in a colonial country, that its aim is the destruction of the imperialist-feudal

regime and the establishment of a people's democratic state, that it can be led only by the working class and its party, and that the revolution must develop along the path of *protracted armed struggle*, combined with the democratic reforms in agrarian relation brought about by the action of the peasant masses. And the very fact that Telangana has withstood all the attacks made by the government, which has concentrated enormous forces to crush it, shows beyond all doubt the tremendous vitality of the movement, its immense potentialities and striking power if spread over in more and more areas and combined with actions of other classes, especially the working class.

### *Weakness of the Popular Movement*

Despite all this it must be recognised that one of the characteristic features of the present situation in India is that the *growth of the mass movement has not kept pace with the growth of discontent with and opposition to the government* and its policies. The movement bears an extremely unorganised and uneven character. While armed struggle is being waged in Telangana, and armed struggle is being developed in Andhra and in the Hajang areas of East Pakistan, in the greater part of the country there are practically no peasant unions and there is no peasant movement, even of the most elementary type. Same is the truth about the strike movement, about the student movement, about the people's movement in general. Very few big political strikes have taken place during the last two years. Even as regards mass economic strikes, the socialist-led strike of 2,40,000 textile workers of Bombay is the first of its type in a big industrial centre.

Despite the tremendous discontent against the Nehru government's foreign policy and the ever-growing menace of war, the peace movement remains a movement confined mainly to the following of the Communist Party and the mass organisations led by it, less than 300,000 signa-

tures have been collected to the Stockholm appeal and American films showing the bombardment of Korean cities and villages are being screened with impunity everywhere. The tremendous possibilities created by the international and national events of the last two years for developing a powerful countrywide mass movement against the government have not materialised. The mass movement, taking the country as a whole, remains at a low level.

India, described by Stalin in 1924, as one of the weakest links in the chain of imperialism, remains under imperialist rule, while the chain is being broken in adjoining countries.

This weakness of the popular movement is due *primarily to the disunity that prevails in the ranks of the popular forces*. While the spontaneous unity forged in many actions—the Gwalior student demonstration and the present mass strike in Bombay are two recent examples—has shown the mass urge for unity and the great possibility for such unity, the firm political and organisational links that alone could have put the unity movement on solid basis have not been forged. The movement for linguistic provinces, which drew in large masses of congressmen, the agrarian struggles for land reform, against evictions, and against the government's procurement policies, the strike movements of workers and students—all have remained on *parallel rails* and have not been converged into one single mighty torrent, into a common movement for freedom and democracy. Due to this, not merely the popular movement as a whole has not developed to the pitch to which it could have been developed, but the movement of each class and section has remained weak.

The strength of the present government lies not merely in the influence of the Congress, which though still considerable is rapidly weakening but, above all, in the *disunity of the forces opposed to it*. There is no unity among left parties, there is hardly any contact between the left parties on the one hand and the progressive forces that

are breaking away from the Congress on the other, dissensions reign in the ranks of the students (the AISF had a membership of only 80,000 while participants in student actions numbered two million according to AISF report. We do not know the present membership figures); mass kisan sabhas, uniting the peasant masses, exist in very few places. Worst of all, the working class itself is split (apart from the INTUC) in three all-India organisations and in rival trade unions in practically every trade-union centre. Disunity, brought about not merely by direct government agencies like the INTUC but also and increasingly by the disruptive tactics of the Socialist Party, is the basic reason for the present state of our national-liberation movement—its uneven character, its narrow sweep, its low level, taking the country as a whole. It cannot be too strongly emphasised that without overcoming this disunity, without forging the unity of the fighting masses—not a passive formal unity, but unity for struggle, unity for action—it will be impossible for the people to march forward and overthrow their hated enemies.

Such a unity could be built only by the working class and under the leadership of the Communist Party. And the basic failure of the party has been the failure to build this unity, despite the tremendously favourable national and international situation, and develop, under working-class leadership, a powerful united mass movement for the overthrow of the present imperialist-feudal order. The party has failed to give form and direction to the growing mass discontent against the government; it has failed to unify the numerous antigovernment struggles into one single broad stream; it has failed to build up mass organisations by correct leadership of the masses; above all, it has failed to itself grow into a mass party by fulfilling these tasks. Thanks to these failures, the swing away from the Congress has not meant a swing towards the party; on the contrary, it is other parties, especially the Socialist Party and Congress factions, that have utilised the mass discontent for strengthening their own position. It will be

possible for us to rectify the mistakes of the last two and a half years only if this *basic failure* is recognised, the full extent of damage done by it is assessed and the root causes are laid bare.

It is recognised by all today that whereas reformism and subservience to the bourgeoisie characterised our slogans and policies in the earlier period and caused the havoc described in the "Report on Reformism" adopted by the second party congress, the party, since that congress and especially since December 1948, swung to the other extreme and pursued left-sectarian and adventurist policies which not merely prevented us from building a broad mass movement against the government and leading it, but isolated us even from our own class, the working class, smashed up our movement and our mass organisations in most provinces, and weakened and disrupted the party itself to an extent unprecedented in our history.

The attempt made by the old PB to make out that everything was going on well, that the party was on the way to become the leader of the masses, that the party itself, instead of getting weaker and weaker, was becoming more and more 'steeled' and 'bolshevised' stands revealed today as a dishonest attempt, as a foul deception, as a piece of deliberate cheating of the loyal and trusting ranks by the leadership.

### *The Crisis in Our Party*

How serious the damage caused by the left-sectarian and adventurist policies of the last two and a half years has been, it is difficult to assess fully in the absence of an authoritative report issued by the party centre. Certain facts however, which are known to all, give a rough idea.

Party membership has fallen from nearly a hundred thousand to barely 20,000. The damage has been the most serious in the industrial cities and areas where the main strength of the party lay. In Tamilnadu (in Madras pro-

vince), formerly our strongest proletarian base, the party membership is estimated to have gone down from 5000 to 200. In Bombay, the GKU (textile workers' union) is today controlled and run by workers who have gone out of the party. In Cawnpore, Sholapur, Ahmedabad, Delhi, Dhulia, Amalner—in fact, in all workingclass centres, the bulk of party members have either gone out of the party or are inactive.

The trade unions led by the party are in a state of complete paralysis and stagnation. The real membership of the AITUC today is no more than a hundred thousand (though it is officially shown as what it was two years ago, viz eight hundred thousand). Trade-union membership in Cawnpore, formerly our stronghold, stands today at 200. The BB&CI Union membership has fallen from 12,000 to 3000. On the railways, where we were the strongest force two years ago, we have hardly any mass union today and are unable to move the workers into action. Today 240,000 textile workers of Bombay are on strike and their strike is being led by the Socialist Party—a fact which strikingly reveals the state to which the party has been reduced in the working class. (It must be remembered that ever since 1928, the party has been the undisputed leader of the workers in Bombay and each and every major strike of the textile workers in Bombay was led by the party.)

The mass peasant unions which the party led have been practically wiped out, except in certain small areas in Bihar, Bengal and UP. Except in Telangana, where the peasant movement has reached the level of uprising, the party is not today leading a broad peasant movement anywhere.

(About the form and nature of armed struggle in Andhra and Haiyang areas—East Pakistan—we have not yet received any information.)

No real mass papers are being conducted by the party today. The Marathi *Mashal* has a circulation of only 3000 while the textile workers alone in this city number



250,000. The state of paralysis and disintegration of the party can be seen in the columns of our papers in the absence of factual reports and news from provinces. The closing down of the *Indo-Soviet Journal*, the poor number of the *Soviet Bhoomi* sold here, the absence of mass literature produced by us on current national and international issues, despite the tremendous demand for such literature, are indications of the state of the party, of our isolation from the people.

Despite the general and widespread sympathy for the Korean people in their struggle for liberation, and despite the general hatred against the American imperialists and opposition to the India government's policy on the issue of Korea, we have not been able to run a mass campaign or organise even one big demonstration anywhere in India.

The character and scope of our peace movement can be seen from the fact that the all-national target for the collection of signatures is only five million and even of this figure, less than 300,000 have actually been collected. The letter sent by the WFDY to the Students' Federation shows how even on this vital issue we are lagging far behind every other country.

Today, with the food crisis reaching alarming proportions and starvation deaths being reported from all provinces, it is the socialists who are organising hunger marches in various parts, the party and organisations led by it being hardly in the picture.

Every party document meant for innerparty circulation, falls in the hands of the police—the "CC Letter" was quoted by government ministers and extracts from it given long before most comrades saw it. This, together with the repeated exposure of underground centres in many provinces, shows the extent to which police agents have penetrated the party.

Such is the condition to which the party has been reduced.

It cannot be too strongly emphasised that the fate of our national movement for freedom and democracy depends today on how rapidly the party is able to correct its mistakes, reforge its links with the masses and lead them forward. The open drive of the imperialists towards war, the desperation caused among them by the fiasco of their policies, their plans to use India as their war base, give added importance and urgency to the tasks that the party in India has to fulfil in order to discharge its duties and responsibilities towards the Indian people and the people of the whole world.

It is in this context that the developments in our party since the publication of the article "Mighty Advance of the National-Liberation Movement in Colonial and Dependent Countries" (27 January, 1950) in the Cominform journal have to be studied and understood.

The article unleashed a veritable storm inside the party. The old party leadership, which had pursued left-sectarian and adventurist policies for over two years and established a terror regime inside the party, disbanding committees, suspending and expelling comrades who dared to criticise it on any issue, came in for sharp criticism from the comrades in all provinces. The leadership first tried to minimise the mistakes and crimes it had committed and afterwards, when that proved impossible, admitted its mistakes only formally, in order to retain its position and win back the confidence of the party ranks which it had abused for full two years and brought the party to the verge of disaster.

So completely discredited it had been, however, so heinous its crimes, including suppression of international documents, that the CC had to be reconstituted and the main authors of the left-sectarian policy and Titoite organisational methods removed from the CC.

All these have however not solved the innerparty crisis which remains as deep as ever and is deepening every day. Torn by dissension, threatened with splits, the party stands paralysed at a time when the mass hatred against

the government has reached a higher level than ever before, a mighty strike wave is rising and militant clashes in Gwalior, Indore and other centres indicate a period of stormy battles ahead.

The question that inevitably arises is: Why is it that the innerparty crisis has not yet been resolved, why is it that for full eight months after the publication of the Cominform editorial, the party has been unable to unify the ranks and arrive at a clear understanding of the nature of the mistakes committed and the way to correct them? Why is it that the innerparty controversy rages as fiercely as it did eight months ago, paralysing all our mass work and reducing us to a state of utter passivity and impotence?

The reason is that, in the opinion of many comrades all over the country, the new central committee has failed to understand the meaning of the Cominform article, failed to understand the significance of the *immediate and special tasks* placed before our party in that article, failed to understand the real nature of the mistakes committed by the party during the last two and a half years and is therefore, in practice, pursuing the same policies of left-sectarianism and adventurism that worked havoc. Further, that the organisational measures taken by the CC—the 'reconstitution' of the CC with the inclusion of only those who 'unreservedly accept' the interpretation of the Cominform article given in the "CC Letter", the formation of provincial organising committees on the same basis, the decision to call a plenum only of the 'reconstituted' CC members and of comrades elected by these very organising committees—will only intensify the crisis in the party, intensify discussions and differences, prevent the hammering out of a correct line and the evolving of a leadership enjoying the confidence of the ranks and able to unify and lead them. The differences are therefore basically political though they are inevitably linked with organisational issues as well.

Before dealing with these differences, it is necessary to

state the main points on which there is agreement in party ranks. All comrades today agree:

(1) That our revolution is a people's democratic revolution, with agrarian revolution as its axis, with its tasks basically of a national-liberationist character and with imperialism and its collaborators—feudalism and the big bourgeoisie—as the enemy.

(2) That this revolution has to be led by the working class and its party, which has to form a broad united front of all anti-imperialist classes, including the national bourgeoisie and with workingclass-peasant unity as its main base.

(3) That the revolution will develop along the path of China, along the path of protracted armed struggle, leading to the formation of liberated areas and the creation of a powerful people's liberation army to smash imperialist rule and progressively liberate the whole country.

Despite unanimity on these basic and vital points, there is no unanimity however on the *immediate tactical line* that the party has to pursue, on what the *immediate tasks* of the party are and how they are to be carried out. The documents issued by the CC—(1) "The CC Letter to the Ranks" (1 June); (2) "The Report on Left Deviation Inside the CPI": and (3) "Organisational Report of the CC"\*—give the CC's understanding of the Cominform article, its estimation of the present situation in the country, its understanding of the mistakes committed by the party in the last two years and its tactics and slogans for the present period. With all these, we are in basic disagreement and we are firmly of the opinion that the new line will not only not help to take the party forward, but will further weaken it and smash it up completely. We shall, in this note, attempt to indicate our differences with the present CC in broad outline. For this, we shall base our-

\* See documents III, IV and V of 1950.

selves primarily on the three CC documents mentioned above.

The Cominform editorial of 27 January has formulated the situation in India and the tasks of the Indian communists.

We hold that the formulations made here are clearcut and specific. And that, if the CC had read the lines carefully and not tried to read *between* the lines as it has done, the innerparty crisis would have been resolved long ago and the party set on correct rails.

### *Sectarianism Persists*

While the old PB read in the editorial a complete justification of its left-sectarian policies\* and ignored the tasks placed before us—the strengthening of the alliance between workers and all peasants, the fighting for agrarian reform and the building of a broad united front of all anti-imperialist classes, parties and sections—the new CC reads in it a complete vindication of the Andhra document of 1948, with its main formulation about civil war and its main emphasis on armed struggle, and ignores the very tasks which the old PB also ignored. It argues that armed struggle in the form of guerilla war will *itself be the main weapon* in the present stage in every part of the country to build worker-peasant unity, to build the democratic unity of the people and to build a mass communist party, for establishing proletarian hegemony. Although we fully recognise the immense service to the party rendered by the Andhra comrades, who were the first to point out the basic mistakes of the political thesis adopted by the second party congress and who developed and led the Telangana battle against overwhelming odds, we do not agree with their interpretation of the Cominform article, with their estimation of the present situation in India and with the tactical line proposed by them and accepted by the CC.

\* See document II of 1950.

The first question is: Who are the allies and who are the enemies of the proletariat in the people's democratic revolution?

The "CC Letter" says: "In building the united national front, several points have to be kept in mind, viz the basis of the front is the alliance of the workers and the *toiling* peasantry, under the leadership of the working class" (emphasis added).

It should be noted that the Cominform article stresses the task of strengthening the alliance with "*all* the peasantry". Further, Mao in his article on "Dictatorship of People's Democracy" speaks of the "Dictatorship of people's democracy headed by the working class and *based on the alliance of workers and peasants.*" In the same article, Mao says: "...chiefly the alliance of the working class *with the peasantry* for it constitutes 80 to 90 per cent of the Chinese population, constitutes the *basis* of the dictatorship of people's democracy".

It is known to all that the old PB's sectarian understanding on the agrarian issues led it to narrow down the base of the people's democratic front and caused immense harm to the peasant movement. It appears to us that the new CC is also doing the same, though in a modified form.

Again, the "CC Letter" treats all rich peasants who carry on *any* feudal exploitation as 'enemies of the front'. In practice, this would lead not only to the exclusion of almost *all* rich peasants because practically all of them carry on *some* feudal exploitation (renting out part of their land, etc.) but also to placing of many middle peasants in the category of rich peasants. The specific warning given by the Chinese leaders on this issue, the distinction made by them between those who engage in 'slight feudal exploitation' and those who derive more than 25 per cent of their income from such exploitation is forgotten by the CC and all who engage in *any* feudal exploitation are placed, without exception, in the category of *enemies*.

The same tendency is revealed in treating the question of alliance with the middle bourgeoisie. The CC states that "there are some sections (of the middle bourgeoisie) who though not big by themselves, yet are intimately connected with feudal or bourgeois interests and hence are enemies of the revolution".

It goes without saying that the mere small size of one's capital does not make one progressive. But the *criterion* which the CC has laid down for consideration of a section as progressive is, in our opinion, wrong. The CC would consider all those sections "which have *direct link with big bourgeoisie* or interests bound with feudal exploitation" as counterrevolutionary. This would automatically exclude a vast number of middle bourgeoisie from the united front for they have "direct link" with the big bourgeoisie. It should be noted that Mao has specifically stated that those who have "no connection or comparatively fewer connections with *imperialism* are the real national bourgeoisie". Nowhere have we read Mao or any Chinese leader making connection with the *big bourgeoisie* as the criterion for deciding the counterrevolutionary character of petty and middle bourgeoisie.

The big bourgeoisie is undoubtedly an enemy. Those who have links with them will vacillate, will waver and very often take *reactionary* stand. All this is true. But to go further and treat as enemy all those who have direct link with the big bourgeoisie would mean forgetting the national-liberationist nature of our struggle, forgetting its anti-imperialist and antifeudal tasks and *extending the sphere of our enemies*.

Sectarianism, even on the question of class alliances, continues, though in a modified form.

Sectarianism and adventurism continue in the *tactical* line also.

The "Report on Left-Sectarian Deviation" confines itself mainly to a *theoretical and ideological* criticism of the basic documents issued by the old PB. The tactical mistakes—practical, concrete mistakes—are either not men-

tioned or glossed over. This inadequate selfcriticism has led to totally inadequate correction. Mistakes cannot be corrected unless they are frankly recognised.

Everyone knows that it is not enough to understand the *stage of our revolution*. It is also necessary to understand the *stage of our movement*, its actual level, in order to know what concrete tasks face it. To forget this is to forget everything that the teachers of Marxism taught us about tactics.

One of the basic causes of the mistakes of the old PB lay in its refusal to take into account the concrete conditions of the revolutionary movement in our own country—a task absolutely imperative for a serious revolutionary party—for working out the tactical line. It refused to make a concrete analysis of the political situation, of the correlation of class forces, of the stage of mass consciousness, of our own strength and influence vis-a-vis the reactionary and reformist forces. It was guilty of *gross subjectivism*, of substituting wish for fact, of *overestimation and exaggeration* of the degree of radicalisation of the masses, of the extent of isolation of reformists. From the indisputable and visible fact that the mass of people were getting disillusioned with the Congress, it drew the conclusion that the disillusionment was already *complete* and the masses were merely waiting for 'a bold lead' from the party to advance for the forcible overthrow of the government. Its whole 'tactical line', based on this ridiculous and false understanding, became one of issuing 'calls for action' and initiation of militant action by the vanguard, mainly party cadres and supporters, to move the masses into action.

On the one hand, we overestimated the maturity of the situation and the degree of revolutionisation of the masses and indulged in adventurist action with the aim of 'setting an example' before the people. On the other, we *underestimated* the fighting capacity of the masses, of the possibility of moving them into action for their own concrete demands and of building the unity of the people through



such action. We overestimated the strength of the enemy, of the extent of 'white terror' in the country as a whole, underestimated the volume of democratic opinion in the country and in practice adopted the defeatist 'theory' of the inevitability of fascism, of the impossibility of winning day-to-day demands in face of 'white terror' and in the midst of the economic crisis. The result was that on the one hand, we issued extreme radical slogans and engaged in frontal clashes with the police in the hope of galvanising the masses; on the other, we followed a line of opportunist passivity in relation to the concrete issues facing the people—peace, civil liberties, housing, refugee rehabilitation, high prices, exorbitant government demands on the peasantry in the name of zamindari abolition and procurement, evictions, real wage-cut, etc. More and more the basic outlook and even our agitational line became: 'Nothing can be won till the present government is overthrown and a people's democratic government established.' This apparently 'revolutionary' outlook led in practice to the failure to work out a *mass policy*, a policy of developing a *mass movement* and building *mass organisations*.

Totally ignoring the fact that the strength of the government lay in the disunity of the forces opposed to it, in the disunity of the popular forces, we failed to work out tactics and slogans to achieve popular unity on concrete immediate issues. We allowed the socialists and reformists to disrupt the AITUC and the AIRF, seeing in the disruption, not a weakening, but a strengthening, of the workingclass movement. We transformed our students' federation into a narrow sect of communist students, our peace movement into a movement of our own following. We liquidated our kisan sabhas, instead of building kisan unity. Instead of winning over lakhs and lakhs of congressmen who were getting disillusioned with the Congress but were not yet prepared to leave it, we made the atrocious formulation from the students' federation platform that 'all congressmen are party' to the counter-

revolutionary policies and methods of the government (Students' Federation Report, *Communist* No 5). We denounced the Workers' and Peasants' Party, the most progressive left party in the country, as an agency of the bourgeoisie. We denounced every left party in the same terms and refused to differentiate between the Socialist Party leadership and the honest ranks. We ran our newspapers as mere bulletins of our activities, more and more of jail clashes only, for that had become our main 'front', written in heavy unreadable language, paying no heed to the actual happenings in the country, the concrete issues facing the people, and failed to conduct a live and real exposure campaign against the government. In a period of tremendous mass radicalisation and growing thirst for political literature, we failed to issue streams of pamphlets on live international and national issues.

Instead of breaking through the selfimposed isolation that these policies and methods brought about, we glorified in that isolation and looked upon ourselves as 'irreconcilable revolutionaries' fighting against one and all.

*About all this, the new CC has to say nothing* in its 100-page "Report on Left Deviation". It declares that the old PB "developed a fullfledged trotskyite thesis" and pursued "left-sectarian policies and adventurist methods" but does not go beyond this abstract statement; does not concretise the manifestations of left-sectarianism and trotskyism, does not stress that the line was a disruptive line, not merely in its theoretical formulations, but also in its actual working out. Trotskyism is treated as an abstract theoretical entity and nothing more, not as an agency of imperialism, which destroys people's unity, destroys workingclass unity and decimates the vanguard in isolation. This failure of the new CC to concretely analyse our past mistakes has left its mark on the new line also, as we shall try to show.

### Old Formulations and New Formulations

A correct analysis of the situation must be the starting-point for a correct tactical line.

The method adopted by the old PB for analysing the concrete situation in the country was one of making bold assertions, based on wishful thinking and not on facts.

Thus it stated that "the strength of the working class led by the party and the AITUC is *far greater* than that of the capitalists and the capitalist Congress government." Further, that the Congress and the reformists are "thoroughly isolated as enemies of the toiling people and friends of capitalists" ("Trade-union Fraction Report", June 1949: emphasis added).

This was written at a time when even in the working class, the party and the AITUC were fast losing ground to the socialists and shortly before we lost the seats in the Bombay corporation from predominantly workingclass areas which we had held till then.

Therefore "the situation is thus ripe for an all-India assault on the capitalists and their government".

How does the *new* CC analyse the situation? How does its methods contrast with that of the old PB? The following extracts from the "CC Letter" will show that:

"The Congress government is *thoroughly exposed before the entire people* as the tool of bloodsuckers, before its own followers."

And "the situation is ripe for the *smashing of the ruling class by armed action of the people*" (emphasis added).

Not merely the methods of analysis, but even the very words used are strikingly similar. The only 'difference' is that while the old PB thought the situation was "ripe (in June 1949) for an all-India assault" on the government the new PB thinks that the situation is "ripe for the *smashing of the ruling class* by armed action of the people".

Such is the 'difference' between the understanding of

the old PB and the new CC about the situation in our country.

How then does the new CC criticise the concrete practical mistakes of the old PB? The "Report on Left-Deviation in the CPI" makes that clear.

The 'criticism' is not that the old PB was guilty of *over-estimation* in analysing the situation, but was guilty of *underestimation*, it merely saw the 'upsurge' and did not see that the upsurge had already reached the level of *civil war*, i.e. open armed battle between the government and the people. It merely thought that the situation was "ripe for an all-India assault" and did not realise that the situation was "ripe for the smashing of the ruling class by armed action".

The report also lays down the 'test' for deciding who is a revolutionary and who is a reformist. "Anyone who refuses to see the truth... that there is actually a civil war on... cannot claim a grain of revolutionary outlook in him." No wonder, the CC is busy 'reorganising' the committees by including only those who have this 'revolutionary outlook'. It must be remembered that the ex-general secretary, B. T. Ranadive, also denounced everyone who did not agree with his analysis as 'reformist', disbanded committees and 'reorganised' them with 'revolutionists' of his choice.

From the overall assessment of the political situation in India, the new CC comes to the conclusion that since civil war is 'actually on' and since 'revolution has already begun', therefore, "guerilla warfare in the set circumstances of today has become the main and *basic form* of struggle before the Indian revolutionary movement *as a whole*" (emphasis in original).

And the "CC Letter" states that the situation is ripe in the country as a whole, 'barring a few areas', for waging such armed struggle. The basic criticism made against the old PB is that it forgot the civil war, that it indulged in frontal clashes with the enemy and pinned its faith in general strike, instead of developing guerilla war in the

countryside. In this and almost in this *alone*, the concrete mistake of the old PB is seen. This is how the Cominform article is also 'interpreted'.

We are of the opinion that the CC has not understood the meaning of the term 'civil war'. Civil war is a characteristic feature of the revolutionary movement when *armed forces* of the people face *armed force* of the government, when the battle between these two *armed forces dominates the national political situation*. If the mere fact that the big bourgeoisie with the political following enters political scene as a counterrevolutionary force and is opposed by the masses under the Communist Party—if this mere fact were enough to constitute 'civil war' then countries like France and Italy would be today in the throes of a civil war, then the period in Germany after the advent of Hitler to power would have been a period of civil war. Even the facts about Telangana and Andhra, given by the CC itself, do not in the least warrant the formulation that India is in the midst of a civil war. We have not seen such a formulation in any international document on India. They have described the present stage as 'the *agrarian stage* of the national-liberation struggle' which certainly is a much lower stage than the stage of civil war.

Not merely civil war is on. It *started* in June 1947, with the Mountbatten award. And now it has reached the stage when the situation is "ripe for the smashing of the ruling class by armed action". Unless you believe in this phantasy, you are not a revolutionist! A strange kind of civil war it is, whose existence has not been noticed by even our party members, but has to be 'discovered' by the CC and made acceptable to the ranks by such a threat!

Focusing its attention on China, and drawing false historical parallels, the CC believes that since the betrayal by the Kuomintang and the split in the united front in 1927 marked the beginning of civil war there, *therefore* the betrayal by the Congress and the split in the united national front must be the beginning of civil war in India.

The CC forgets the 'little' fact that the split in China meant also a split in the *armed forces*, that 30,000 soldiers under Chu Teh joined the revolutionaries and that the entire period since then has been dominated by the armed struggle between the Kuomintang and the People's Liberation Army (earlier the Chinese Red Army). Not merely is this a false and exaggerated picture of the reality, but also in its entire understanding, the CC, as all its documents show, lives in an unreal atmosphere, draws mechanical parallels and refuses to study concretely the Indian situation and the Indian developments. It transforms the rich and varied experience of the great Chinese revolution into a set of rigid lifeless formulas, instead of making use of that experience to solve the complex tasks of our own national movement and leading it to victory.

### *Role of Working Class Minimised*

This ignoring of concrete realities and this tendency to draw mechanical parallels are sharply revealed in the formulations of the CC about our tasks on the working-class front, in the role that it assigns to the working class in the 'civil war'.

Proletarian leadership, as every Marxist knows, is an essential condition not merely for the *final* victory over imperialism, but for building a firm fighting unity of the anti-imperialist masses and raising the movement to the level of an uprising. The specific manner in which this leadership is realised, the specific weapon which the proletariat wields however cannot be identical for all countries, but has to vary from country to country, depending on the concrete situation in the country, the nature of its economy and the place of the proletariat in that economy. One of the biggest mistakes of the old PB was its dogmatic understanding about the way in which proletarian leadership is to be realised, an understanding which led to the perspective of political general strike and uprising in cities, followed by armed struggle in the countryside.

In correcting the mistakes of the old PB however the new CC steps into another error, draws mechanical parallel between India and other colonial countries and minimises the importance of the working class as a working class. As a result of this, not merely the concrete lessons of the mass movement in India are forgotten, but working-class leadership itself is practically liquidated.

It should be noted here that although it is in the working class that the party has received the most serious setback in its entire history, and although it is the reestablishment of our leadership in the working class that constitutes one of the key tasks before the party, this long hundred-page report says nothing about the actual mistakes that led to this havoc or the actual steps that are to be taken today to undo the harm and contents itself only with vague phrases about 'suitable forms of struggle' and 'correct tactics' on the plea that "it would be out of place to go into too many details about it". This very manner of dealing with the question throws revealing light on the outlook of the CC and the importance it attaches to the working class and our tasks in relation to it.

In his wellknown speech before the University of the Toilers of the East, Stalin placed India, as distinct from countries like Morocco, China and Egypt, in the category of colonies "which are capitalistically more or less developed and which possess a more or less numerous national proletariat", and stated that "it is a question of preparing the proletariat of such colonies as India for the role of the leader in the national-liberation movement". The history of our national movement shows the tremendous role that *mass actions by the working class* can and must play in realisation of this leadership. For this, one need to refer only to the events in India in 1945-46, when the mass movement reached the level of armed struggle for power.

Today, on the plea of white terror in cities and in the name of 'China path', the CC wants to forget these concrete lessons of our own history and minimise the im-

portance of one of the most powerful weapons forged by our anti-imperialist movement during the last 30 years.

While recognising the possibility of strikes "where conditions of white terror have not yet reached extreme proportions", it robs the workingclass actions in the present period of their revolutionary content and assigns to the working class primarily and mainly the task of "*accumulation of its strength and secretly lending every conceivable support to the armed struggle in the countryside*". Imagining that the country is already in the midst of a civil war, exaggerating the extent of white terror in the cities, minimising the fighting capacity of the masses and the possibility of moving them into action, the CC talks about "enemy-controlled cities and areas" and formulates a line which in practice reduces the working class to a state of utter passivity and hands it over to the socialist disruptors.

It says little in all its documents about protest actions, solidarity actions, political actions by the working class, which in the past played and must today also play a big part in the establishment of proletarian hegemony in the liberation movement, in galvanising the masses into action, in raising the whole movement to a higher level and giving it immense sweep and striking power.

The CC has not emphasised that workingclass unity has to be the *core of the united national front* and that this unity has to be built at all costs and by all means as one of our key tasks. It has ignored the lesson of China itself, where the tremendous consolidation of the working class under the banner of the party in the years 1925-27 and subsequently created the basis for the great victories. It has taken no steps to build workingclass unity and has ignored to this day the proposals sent by the UTUC for trade-union unity with the AITUC. As the "CC Letter" itself shows, the only criterion in the formation of the new CC was to include those who had advocated armed struggle in the countryside. Finally, the resolutions adopted by the CC in its last meeting emphasise only the deve-



lopment of armed struggle in the countryside and either do not mention or give a minor place to the task of building the workingclass movement. The most glaring example is the resolution on Bombay and Maharashtra committees, which does not even refer to the fact that we stand isolated from the working class in the biggest industrial city in India and have to win back our position there.

All these are the result of total ignoring of the concrete condition in India, the immense importance of the working class in our national politics and national economy, of the tendency to draw mechanical parallels. Besides the working class, the urban poor, the office employees, the teachers, the petty shopkeepers, the students—scattered in cities and towns all over the country—form extremely important sections of our people and have always played big role in the anti-imperialist struggle. With the big bourgeoisie having betrayed the struggle and their own conditions fast deteriorating, all these sections can be won over by the working class and led into battle. Finally, the CC has also not noted how in the past workingclass actions had a galvanising influence on the peasant masses themselves.

By stressing all this, we do not seek to deny the colonial nature of our economy nor do we deny the decisive role that agrarian struggles will play in the creation of partisan and liberated areas. What we want to stress here is that because of the comparatively greater industrial development of India, the development of a network of railways and roads, and because of the lessons taught by our own movement, the working class in India has to play a big role in the development of the national-liberation struggle, not merely as organiser of peasant struggle by the sending of activists to the countryside, but also through its own *mass actions*.

There is a tendency in the "Report on Left Deviation" to ascribe our failure to organise mass actions, especially of the working class, to bring about mass mobilisation, exclusively to the repressive measures of the government

and the prevalence of white terror. This is far from true. No one would deny that the party and the mass organisations led by it became the special targets of government attack and terror, especially in the southern provinces—Kerala, Andhra, Tamilnadu—was intense and severe. Nobody would deny that the government has resorted to bullets and lathicharges to break up meetings, and demonstrations in every part of the country.

But it must be remembered also that the same Bombay working class whom we failed to move despite our repeated strike calls during the last two years, had on the occasion of the RIN revolt faced a thousand times more intense terror and yet not wavered. And if it is argued that there were 'special factors' at that time, then the fact that to-day, despite all threats of the government, 240,000 textile workers of Bombay are on strike, are facing repression, are being supported by all sections of workers in the city—this fact shows conclusively that it was not terror alone that is responsible for our inability to build mass organisations and lead mass actions.

The great solidarity strike of five-lakh Bombay workers on 31 August 1950, the militant fight waged on that day, the heroic battle in which five workers laid down their lives and hundreds were injured, the great popular sympathy that the struggle has evoked—all these are facts which the CC should ponder over.

It was the *unity of the working class, unity of the working class with mass of people*, that made the glorious action at the time of the RIN revolt possible. That very unity and the confidence it created, the burning hatred against foreign rule and the determination on the part of all sections of our people to destroy that rule transformed common men and women into heroes and enabled them to face machineguns and rifles. Today again it is the unity for struggle, unity of the working class behind the demand for bonus that has made the present great strike possible.

The utterly opportunist and defeatist 'theory' which

seeks to explain every failure by reference to white terror has been blown up by hard facts.

The fact that we want to emphasise again is that the party, during the last two years and a half, ignored this very task, the task of *building the unity of the working class*, building the unity of the working class with the mass of our people, specially the peasantry. It ignored the lesson taught by the entire history of the international workingclass movement that unity does not come about by the process of spontaneous development as the result of economic crisis, but has to be built consciously. It ignored the axiom that unity is the main weapon in the struggle against a well-entrenched and powerful enemy. It ignored the task of winning over the masses following the socialists by patient work among them and argued instead that the socialists were *already* isolated. It ignored all work among congressmen and Congress followers, numbering tens of millions, on the plea that 'all congressmen' are reactionary. It ignored all work in reformist mass organisations on the plea that the party had already become stronger than the government. Due to all this, it got more and more isolated from the masses and failed to unite the anti-imperialist forces under its banner.

Instead of seeing all this, the CC wants us to believe that all our setbacks were due to 'white terror' and due to our failure to fight that terror by means of guerilla war. Like petty-bourgeois revolutionists, *it isolates the question of form of struggle from the concrete mass policies followed by the party*. It forgets that it is a total break with Marxism to do so.

### *Armed Struggle and the People*

The crassest manifestation of this petty-bourgeois revolutionism is seen in the section on "Armed Struggle" in the "Report on Left Deviation", the section which forms the heart and the core of the whole document. Not merely is this section, and also the whole document, full of contra-

dictory formulations, but it makes assertions which would stagger anyone who has any knowledge of Indian realities.

It states at one place that the "ranks and the masses of left parties", i.e. those who along with us have to form the core of the united front, show only "the *first signs* of radicalisation" and yet asserts "that the situation is ripe for the smashing of the ruling class by armed action". The CC admits that the party has been very seriously weakened, that our position is very weak in the working class, that we have no kisan movement in the greater part of the country and yet it proceeds to say "that the objective conditions for starting guerilla war are there in *India as a whole* (emphasis added) leaving aside some areas" and that our immediate task in the rural areas is to put the movement "*on the rails of armed struggle*".

As everyone knows, if 'objective conditions' alone were enough, India would have been in the throes of armed struggle long long ago and would by now have achieved national liberation.

Our CC will of course argue that the people of our country 'have a workingclass party' and that its leadership is 'correct'. Hence the conditions are ripe for armed struggle "taking India as a whole, barring some areas". (Why these 'some' unfortunate areas are 'barred', the CC has not explained.)

But common sense, and above all the live experience of Telangana should have taught the CC that the mere *existence* of a communist party is not enough to constitute the subjective factor. It must be a party which is a real communist party, rooted in the masses, looked upon by them with love and respect, with firm links with them, a party which has already achieved a *minimum degree* of *political and organisational consolidation* of the people under its banner.

The CC admits that we have not got such a party today. But it asserts that "it is only by adopting armed guerilla warfare that the party will get strengthened and extended". The CC admits that the party has not been able to

achieve even the minimum extent of unification of the masses and stands seriously weakened even in the working class. But it asserts that only through guerilla struggle, the party "will be able to unite the toiling masses and mobilise all anti-imperialist classes". The CC admits that even those masses that hate the present government "still suffer from legalist and constitutionalist illusions and have not yet come to the path of armed struggle". But it asserts that "it is merely a matter of time"—and not of their own experience as Lenin and Stalin taught—"before they take to the path of armed struggle if there is any force capable of boldly leading them".

And of course the 'force' itself—the party—will get "strengthened and extended only by adopting armed guerilla warfare".

What do all these statements and assertions boil down to? What do they mean?

They mean that according to the CC the main and almost exclusive weapon, "taking India as a whole", for strengthening and extending the party, for uniting the toiling masses and mobilising the anti-imperialist classes, for destroying the constitutionalist and legalist illusions—in fact, for every task that faces the party and the movement is the weapon of guerilla struggle. This magic weapon will solve all the complex tasks facing the party, will reforge its links with the people, will enable it to become their leader. One is irresistibly reminded by these formulations of the similar formulations made by Ranadive that 'bold lead' and 'militant action' will expose reformists, will build workingclass unity, will bring about general strike and lead to uprising.

It will not be out of place here to draw the attention of the CC to a comment made by Lenin in his article "Anti-Militarist Tactics of Social-Democracy", a comment to which we drew the attention of Ranadive also in a note sent to him in September 1949.

Criticising Herve, who tried to isolate the question of tactics from the actual situation, Lenin said:

"The anarchist method of reasoning is revealed here in full measure. The *blind faith in the miraculous power of every 'action directive'*, the abstraction of this 'direct action' from the *general social and political situation, without analysing it in the least*, in a word, the arbitrary mechanical conception of social phenomenon is obvious" (emphasis added).

"Blind faith in the miraculous power of every direct action"—this is the outlook that dominates the "CC Letter". It is the same outlook as that of the old PB.

This outlook also leads the CC to forget all distinction between perspective and a tactical line, between a perspective and a slogan of the day.

The CC in a number of documents has stressed that the "era of contempt for perspective" must end. We entirely agree. But we want to remind the CC that a correct perspective alone is not enough and that perspective must not be confused with the immediate tactical line, with the slogan of the day. A correct perspective also can lead to grossly wrong tactics, if the distinction is obliterated. We would refer the CC to what Stalin said in this connection:

"The third tactical principle of Leninism", said Stalin, in his "Comments on Current Affairs in China", "concerns the question of change of slogans, and of the forms and methods of this change. It concerns the question of how to transform the slogans of the party into slogans for the masses, the question of how to bring the masses to revolutionary positions, so that the masses should become convinced through their own political experience of the correctness of the party's slogans.

"But propaganda and agitation alone cannot convince the masses. For this, the political experience of the masses themselves is necessary. For this, it is necessary that the broad masses should realise through their own experience, the inevitability of overthrowing the present system and establishing a new political and social order.

"It is good if the advanced group, the party, was already convinced of the necessity of overthrowing, say,

the provisional government of Milyukov and Kerensky in April 1917. But this was still inadequate for them to come forward for the overthrow of the government, in order to put forward the slogan of the overthrow of the provisional government and the establishment of soviet power *as the slogan of the day*. In order to convert the formula 'all power to the soviets' from a *perspective* of the immediate period into the *slogan of the day*, one more decisive condition was necessary, viz that the masses themselves should be convinced of the correctness of these slogans and render the party some kind of support or other in carrying this out in practice.

"One must differentiate strictly between a formula as a *perspective* for the immediate future and formula as the *slogan of the day*."

Contrast these statements of Stalin with the formulation of the CC.

"They (the masses) want this fascist raj to end. Though they still suffer from *legalist and constitutionalist illusions*, it is merely a *matter of time* before they take to the path of armed struggle if there is a force capable of boldly leading them."

Stalin speaks of "the political experience of the masses themselves", the CC speaks of "time". Stalin speaks of "propaganda and agitation" not being enough, the CC speaks of "bold lead" being enough.

With our CC, all distinction between perspective and immediate also vanishes—countrywide armed struggle is the perspective—armed struggle is also the immediate *slogan of action* for the country "as a whole".

Due to the same outlook, the CC even when it correctly criticises the old leadership, fails to draw the *correct conclusions* and repeats the same old mistakes.

This criticism against the old PB can only mean that the new CC considers it wrong to have issued the slogan of railway strike without assessing the maturity of the situation, mass mood and the strength of the party. Yet, when it comes to itself, the new CC coolly tells us that "the

objective conditions for starting guerilla warfare are there" not merely in "many areas" as the document "Main Features of the Present Situation" asserted, but "taking India as a whole, leaving aside some areas". And what are these 'objective conditions'? The CC's attempts to narrate them are so ridiculous—'Congress is worse than British raj' is the common talk on everybody's lips, etc.—that they can convince none who knows anything about the Indian situation. To confuse discontent with revolutionary indignation, to confuse the urge to *change* the government with the urge to fight to *overthrow* the government—this is precisely what the old PB did. With equal justification, it urged that workers cursed the government, the railway board and even the socialist leaders and from *that* it concluded that the situation had become revolutionary—and insurrection was "round the corner". The new CC does the same. This has nothing in common with the Marxist-Leninist method of analysing a concrete situation on the basis of the practical activity of the masses themselves.

Workers had 'illusions' about socialists on 9th March, discovers the new CC. What about the peasants today "taking India as a whole"? Have they not, in the greater part of the country, still got illusions about the Congress, about factions that have split away from the Congress and developed new illusions about the socialists and about the Peasants' and Workers' Party? Have they not got illusions about the coming election and about the possibility of a peaceful change in the government? Does the CC imagine that the political consciousness of peasants stands at a higher level than that of workers?

The old PB "did not bother to take a stock of the decrepit state of party organisation" when giving the 9th March call. And yet, at that time, we were the strongest force among the railway workers with most of the real mass unions with us. What about the 'state of party organisation' today? The new CC, which condemns the old PB for giving a single call without taking into account the



state of the party organisation, has yet the hardihood of working out a whole tactical line with guerilla war all over the country as its main plank, completely ignoring the fact that the party organisation today is a hundred times more disrupted and weaker than it was on 9th March. It argues that "it is only by adopting armed guerilla warfare that the party would be strengthened and extended"—a familiar echo of the formulations of the old PB which ascribed miraculous powers of militant action everywhere and for solving every political and organisational problem.

The CC ignores the uneven level of our movement, a characteristic feature to which attention was drawn by Balabushevich. It prescribes universal recipes and cut-and-dried formulas to suit every place. While, lest it be charged with adventurism, it talks in a general way about 'setting our house in order' and about 'minimum preliminary preparations', it qualifies even these half-hearted statements with other grossly adventurist formulations and gives no inkling whatsoever as to how this 'setting of the house in order' is to be done. It treats all as 'organisational tasks' and not as serious *political* tasks—the task of building people's unity and developing a broad mass movement.

We have already seen the role that the CC assigns to the working class. As we all know one of the most characteristic features about petty-bourgeois revolutionism is the role that it assigns to the masses in general, the distinction that it makes between 'active heroes' and passively sympathetic masses.

The CC, with an air of profundity as though it has made a new discovery and enriched Marxism, informs us that "the old yardstick of measuring the readiness of masses for armed action by whether the overwhelming majority of masses themselves are physically coming out in the streets and have accepted the full programme of the party or not has to be discarded" and proceeds to

say that the "general support" of the people is enough for waging guerilla struggle. What this 'general support' means, it has not cared to define, but the "CC Letter" makes it clear that it means nothing more than hatred against the government. (It may be noted that Ranadive also used to make formulations about 'old standard' and 'new standard').

The following statement made by the present general secretary in the CC meeting of May 1950 (which worked out the new line) shows clearly how our present leaders define 'objective factors':

"Congress government has no longer any sympathy, whoever takes action against it gets sympathy. That is the essential background. Question is, can we proceed with this sympathy for armed activity, or have we to wait for masses actually coming out in action? Methods and forms of struggle have to be considered in terms of situation. But without armed action, no progress is possible. Putting 'DF' (democratic front), unity or support of the masses in the old way as a precondition for armed action is wrong" (from "CC Minutes").

We do not want to make any lengthy comment. The formulations speak for themselves. All we want to say is that this is precisely how the terrorists of the past used to argue. They too thought that this kind of "sympathy" is enough. Only they were more *correct*, because in those days of direct British rule, *any and every action* against the government evoked sympathy.

No one has ever stated that masses must accept "the full political programme of the party" or that all of them can be active participants in *all forms* of struggle. ~~the~~ basic question is, whether the masses are to ~~be~~ *active participants* in the struggle against the ~~government~~, *active supporters* (and not 'general supporters') of the guerillas where guerilla struggle is being waged, *makers* of their own history and ~~not~~ *not* passively sympathetic spectators; whether ~~conditions~~ *conditions* exist in India today for such

active mass participation in the movement against the government and if so, through what concrete slogans and day-to-day work this movement is to be developed? Phrases about the 'old yardstick' and the 'new yardstick' evade these very questions. More, they betray a *profoundly defeatist outlook* about the possibility of moving the masses into action and that too in a period of tremendous mass awakening.

The most surprising thing about the passage quoted above is not merely that it ignores the general principles of Marxism about the relation between the vanguard and the masses, it ignores the *live experience* of Telangana itself.

Was it mere hatred against the government and the 'general support' of the masses that enabled us to develop guerilla war in Telangana? The following extract from a document issued by the Andhra provincial committee in February 1950, and circulated by the new CC itself answers the question.

After stating the different conditions between hilly areas where there are natural protections and plains where "we have to depend upon the people to give us protection", the document proceeds to say:

"Even in plains, if roads and bridges are not there, it is difficult for the enemy to come repeatedly and often. Hence it is to the advantage of guerilla squads to sabotage roads and bridges. The more this is done, the better. In the razakar period, in Suryapet area, which is completely plain area, it is because our comrades dug up and destroyed the roads and bridges that guerilla war could be continued. The road between Suryapet and Jangam, a length of 50 miles, was dug up and destroyed by thousands of people. This will give an idea what type and size of people's cooperation is necessary for guerilla war (emphasis added). We must prepare the people for this. When we destroy the communications, precautions must be taken to see that no loss of life occurs for the innocent people."

Is it necessary to make any comment on this revealing passage? Is it necessary to show that the 'new yardstick' discovered by the CC has nothing to do with the experience of Telangana? Is it necessary to prove that the 'new line' which advocates armed struggle all over the country on the basis of 'general support' is not born out of the live experience of Telangana, but is a complete negation of that experience?

The new CC has taken from Telangana only *one thing*—armed struggle—and isolated it from the background in which it developed and *conditions that made it possible*—a mass peasant movement for land, the Andhra Mahasabha, uniting the kisan masses, and with a membership of over a lakh, a strongly entrenched party, conditions that were created by patient and sustained mass work, fight for concrete demands and forging the unity of the people through such fight.

The CC puts the cart before the horse and argues that armed struggle itself will create these conditions. To call this path the Telangana path is a distortion of facts, distortion of history, negation of our own experience. It is a gross distortion of the Cominform editorial.

It may not of course be possible in all guerilla areas to destroy roads on such a vast scale. That is not the point. But is it possible to talk of guerilla war in isolation from a mass movement, in *isolation from active popular support* (in some form or other), in isolation from the *links* that the party has forged by leading the people in their day-to-day battles? Is guerilla war possible merely on the basis of 'general support', 'hatred against the government' and 'organisational preparations'? Or does it require a *minimum level of the movement*?

A document prepared by the Andhra committee and circulated by the CC itself answers this question also.

After tracing the development of the struggle in Nalgonda and the various stages it went through, the document proceeds to say:

"If we see this history of guerilla struggle of Telan-

gana, then it becomes clear that this guerilla warfare is the *expression of the high level reached by the movement*, in the stage of land distribution and of establishing village people's councils. We are continuing the guerilla struggle even after the military intervention to defend the land and gram rajayalu and to extend these" ("Telangana Document, II").

The CC has also not noted the *organisational* lessons taught by Telangana.

"... how was it", asks the "Telangana Document—II", "that the movement led by our party in Karimnagar, Adilabad and Marathwada districts was suppressed by the nizam gangs? Nizam was hated equally in these districts. The reason why the movement in Nalgonda and Warangal districts was able to withstand the nizam's gangs and developed into higher pitch and spread to neighbouring districts Atrabalda etc. was the existence of *organisational form* for the movement in these districts. The reason for the blowup of the movement in other districts was the absence of this organisation and hence the failure to distribute land and establish village people's committees."

Even when every other factor is present it is the existence of a *strong organisation* that is of *decisive importance* for the successful conducting of armed struggle. This is the lesson of Telangana as also of every big struggle fought by us.

Active support of the people, who at Suryapet destroyed roads and made them impassable, a "high level reached by the movement" and a strong organisation—this is what made Telangana possible. This is the secret of Telangana's strength. This is why not merely the nizam, but even Nehru, with all his mighty and powerful hordes, has failed to crush Telangana. While we don't know whether all the tactics and slogans in Telangana were correct, we do know that armed struggle in Telangana was and has been an integral part of the mass peasant movement for land and democracy.

Turning a blind eye to all this, ignoring the fact that we have no peasant movement under our leadership of any level in most provinces, the CC talks of putting the peasant movement 'on the rails of armed struggle' because 'objective conditions' are there 'in India as a whole'. And this it calls the Telangana path!

Armed action, resulting from the outlook that dominates the "CC Letter" can only be armed struggle, not as it developed in Telangana, but only the *organisation of counterterror* against individual police officials, landlords and moneylenders, carried out by party cadres with the mass of people playing no role except as passive sympathisers. Such 'armed struggle' will not 'strengthen and extend' the party, nor forge its links with the masses, but will completely isolate the party and will result in party members being handed over to the police by villagers unable to withstand police terror. It is a matter of common experience that unless the people are united and are politically, organisationally and psychologically prepared to withstand terror, they feel helpless and demoralised when the full blast of terror is let loose. And armed action of this type will certainly not achieve this unity nor prepare the people politically, organisationally and psychologically.

The "CC Letter" informs us that armed struggle is being conducted in Ahmednagar (Maharashtra) and a number of other areas. We do not know about these other areas, but we do know that the type of "armed struggle" that has been on in Ahmednagar is nothing but the organisation of raids on the houses of moneylenders and of counterterror against individual oppressors and that as the result of this type of 'struggle' the party in Ahmednagar has been severely weakened, the kisan sabha virtually smashed and our comrades are finding it difficult to get even shelter from the terror-stricken villagers. Today there is no peasant movement of any type in Ahmednagar district or anywhere in Maharashtra under our leadership. We would therefore request the CC to get

facts about Ahmednagar as well as other areas where armed struggle is reported to be waged.

### *A Line of Blind Adventurism*

The "Andhra Document", from which we have given the extract about the extent of mass participation in the Telangana struggle and which has not been accepted by the CC contains, however, along with many correct formulations, other formulations and directives of an extremely adventurist and terrorist nature. We quote one of them:

"The tasks of these town guerilla squads are: to finish off notorious government officials who take special delight in oppressing the people, landlords who after committing untold atrocities in the villages take protection in the towns and also the exploiters in the towns and other agents who commit atrocities. These squads must destroy their properties, loot government and other exploiters' treasures and cash, etc."

Obviously the phrase "exploiters in the towns and their agents" can be extended to include blackmarketeers, capitalists who refuse wage increase, ministers of the government, etc.

How is this, we would ask, different from terrorism? How is this different from individual murder and dacoity? How will this help to develop a mass movement against the government?

It goes without saying that it is not on grounds of humanitarianism but on *political* grounds that we oppose such actions. It goes without saying also that in a period of mass revolutionary battles, in a period of actual civil war, such actions as a part of the *general mass movement* are common. But to assert that such is the situation anywhere, even in Andhra is totally wrong. Such tactics and such methods of 'struggle', no matter what high-sounding name is given to them, would degenerate into murder and banditry, dissipate our forces, play into the hands

of agents-provocateurs, isolate the party from all honest elements, and supply weapons to the government to discredit and suppress the party and the movement led by it.

Such is the length to which blind sectarianism and adventurism has gone.

Why has the CC worked out this blindly adventurist line? Why has it isolated the question of *form of struggle* from the *level of the mass movement*? Why has it tried to discover a 'new yardstick' to measure the level of mass consciousness?

One of the reasons, as we once pointed out, is that the CC wants to find shortcuts to revolution. It cannot deny the reality that today the party has been seriously weakened, stands isolated in the working class itself, is leading no peasant movement in the greater part of the country, its mobilising power is far less than at any time during the last ten years. But having pinned its faith in guerilla struggle 'in the country as a whole', the CC has to fit that struggle in the existing frame of national-political reality. It has set before itself the task of evolving a method of guerilla struggle which the party can undertake in its *present stage of struggle*, with the mass movement at its *present level*, with our mass organisations shattered or paralysed by left-sectarian policies and methods.

The result is the 'new line'.

But this is not all. There are other causes also.

### *Failure to Learn from History*

We are of the opinion that one of the root causes for this is in the CC's inability to understand the *events of the last three years and their lessons*. The CC's formulations about civil war not merely do not help to learn these lessons but hinder this task.

As the CC documents show, the CC thinks that the only or at least the main weapon used by the government against the people during these years has been the wea-



pon of terror. Also that the main reason for our setbacks has been our failure to evolve guerilla forms of struggle to fight this terror.

Both these statements are only partially true. They give a *false and distorted picture of the reality*. They make us blind to our real failures and therefore blur the real tasks.

When saying this, we do not in the least dispute the fact that our comrades in Telangana and in Madras presidency had to face a terror regime of a most brutal type. We also do not dispute that the forms of guerilla struggle adopted by the Telangana comrades which enabled them to fight back the terror of the government are an extremely valuable heritage of this period and would be of immense value to comrades everywhere.

But the enemy has not used the weapon of terror alone. He has used other weapons also. If terror alone had been sufficient to preserve imperialist rule, the imperialists would not have had to make a 'tactical retreat' and come to terms with the Congress, thereby enlisting the support of the most astute and experienced bourgeois leadership existing in any colonial country.

Against the popular movement, the government has wielded *not one but three weapons*.

(1) It has sought to wipe out the party by methods of terror—mass arrests, bans, cold-blooded murder of our comrades, punitive expeditions against our villages, murder, rape, loot, collective fine, etc. as well as bloody suppression of strikes.

(2) It has utilised the immense prestige of the Congress and also increasingly the services of rightwing socialists to *disrupt the mass organisations and mass movement*—disruption of the AITUC and the AIRF, setting up of rival kisan sabhas, student unions, sabotage of mass struggles, diversion of mass movement into harmless channels like satyagraha, fast, etc.

(3) It has utilised *constitutionalist illusions* by holding before the people the promise of elections on the basis

of adult franchise, thus holding back from decisive revolutionary action even those sections of masses who have already lost faith in the government and want to change it.

Such are the weapons that the government has used to destroy the vanguard in isolation, to disrupt the people's movement, to sow disunity in the ranks of the popular masses, to paralyse the people. The present low level of our movement and its extreme uneven and unorganised character prove that the efforts of the astute leaders of the Indian big bourgeoisie have not been entirely fruitless. In our opinion, it is the failure of the CC to understand the complex nature of the government's policies, the cunning way in which it has attempted to defeat the forces of revolution, that is largely responsible for the onesided nature of the tactical line the CC has worked out. *A distorted and wrong understanding of events cannot but result in a distorted and wrong tactical line.*

The CC reduces the whole question of struggle against the government to a question of correct *military tactics*—guerilla war as against frontal attack. The whole section on "Forms of Struggle" in the "Report on Left-Deviation" deals exclusively with this question. The CC fails to see the *political weapons* used by the government against the people, the *political offensive* it launched against the party on an all-India scale, and seeks to work out a tactical line of fighting the government whose core and essence is 'correct military tactics'. It is due to this mechanical attempt to equate military battles with political battles that it does not understand the real nature of the mistakes of the old leadership.

The party could defeat the policies of the government and rally the masses under its banner and itself grow only if it had correctly understood the nature of the weapons used by the enemy, only if it had combined the guerilla struggle in Telangana and other areas with the task of building *people's unity* on a national scale, with the task of *disillusioning the masses* through their own experience

and leading them forward step by step. This is precisely what the party failed to do.

The old PB, under the leadership of Ranadive, also saw only one aspect of the government's policy, the aspect of terror. It shut its eyes to the fact that the strength of the government lay in the disunity of the people, in the prevalence of the constitutionalist illusions, and it formulated the 'tactical line' of fighting government terror by means of 'militant action'. The line was carried out in detail in Bengal disregarding all criticism, all opposition from rank-and-file members of the party.

According to the Bengal committee's report, railway stations were attacked, bombs were thrown on trams and buses, attempts were made to break up Nehru's meeting with only our own supporters, the house of Suren Ghosh, the Bengal Congress president, was attacked, fire was set to Congress offices (see Bengal committee's selfcritical report). These acts as well as the use of acid bulbs in meetings and demonstrations were part of the old leadership's 'revolutionary' line.

Terrorism and even gangsterism masqueraded as the line of the 'struggle against the bourgeoisie'. What havoc has this caused, everyone can see today.

Can a real change, a change in practice, result merely because the new CC recognises that the struggle is not a "struggle against the bourgeoisie" but a "struggle against imperialists, feudalists and big bourgeoisie" and the main battlefield is not cities but rural areas. Only children would believe that. As long as we do not see that the main weapon in the fight against the government is the weapon of people's unity, as long as we do not see how and why the government has succeeded in keeping the movement at its present level, as long as we do not see the government terror can be fought only by rousing the people, the whole attempt would be to work out a policy whose essence is the organisation of counterterror. It would be a policy of *blind retaliation against individual oppressors of the people*—landlords, moneylenders and

police officers—of looting their property in the name of 'expropriation', of 'finishing them off', in the name of guerilla struggle. It will be a policy of 'tooth for tooth, eye for eye' as formulated so eloquently in the "Andhra Document".

It will be a policy which will not merely dissipate the forces of the party, but lead to the liquidation of the party itself. Such is the character of the present CC line.

This liquidationist tendency is also seen in the manner in which the CC wants to use our legal newspapers to 'popularise' the party line.

As everyone knows, the old PB conducted the party papers not merely in a sectarian manner but with utter disregard for all legal considerations. The issue of the *People's Age* on the eve of the proposed 9th March action was a classic example of this madness. Even subsequently, as we pointed out in a note sent to Ranadive, the paper continued to be conducted in a most adventurist manner, indulging in open glorification of bomb-throwing.

Not learning from all this, the new CC insisted on the publication in our open paper of a statement that the party is going to take to the path of Telangana in every part of the country, that this is the essence of the new CC line. What risk such a statement creates not merely for the paper but for the press itself, the CC did not bother to find out. And when comrades working on the paper deleted this part from the CC statement, they were pulled up by the CC for distorting the party line. But for the firmness the comrades showed, but for their insistence that the sentence must be deleted on legal grounds which ultimately made the CC reconsider the question, we might have been today without a paper and without a press.

On the one hand, the CC declares the present period to be a period of civil war and white terror; on the other, it wants to run our legal papers to openly advocate and glorify armed struggle. It does not bother if that means the liquidation of the paper itself and our main link with the people being snapped.

### ***Why this Failure?***

The question that comrades will inevitably ask is: How could it be that the Andhra comrades, who built and led the Telangana movement and were the first to make a basic correction in the political thesis, work out such a wrong line? Is it not on the contrary more likely that we are mistaken and the line given by the CC is a correct application of the Telangana experience and of the Chinese path?

We shall try to answer this question briefly.

In the first place, the Andhra document of June 1948, though correct in many vital respects, made wrong formulations about civil war and also failed to see the complex nature of the government's policies, the various weapons used by the government.

Secondly, while we are not yet in possession of adequate facts to assess to exact character of the armed struggle in Andhra, it appears to us from what little we have been able to learn that, barring certain areas in Andhra, the struggle there is not of the same nature as in Telangana. In Telangana, guerilla struggle developed on the crest of a rising mass peasant movement for land, it was in the nature of a *peasant uprising*. In Andhra, on the contrary, or at least in many parts of Andhra, the struggle is essentially of a retaliatory character—armed squads of ours attacking landlords, moneylenders and policemen with the mass of people playing no role except as sympathisers. It is this type of armed struggle that the CC wants to extend all over the country and that too in the absence of a strong party and strong organisation as exist in Andhra.

Thirdly, as stated in the "Organisational Report of the CC", Rajeswara Rao, the former PB member from Andhra and the present general secretary, himself made an 'opportunist surrender' to the old PB and accepted all the three PB documents (December 1948) which not merely condemned Mao Tse-tung but advocated an adventurist trotskyite line, pinning faith in 'bold lead' and 'militant

action'. The "Report on Left Deviation", drafted by the Andhra comrades and accepted by the PB makes a totally inadequate criticism of the old PB's line, does not stress how we were guilty of *overestimation* of the situation and ran ahead of the masses, instead of leading them forward step by step.

Fourthly, and above all, the overwhelming majority of CCMs had wholeheartedly and 'unreservedly' supported all the slogans and tactics of the old PB, had themselves been the instruments in the provinces in executing the PB line, both politically and organisationally, some of them going beyond the PB itself in sectarianism and adventurism. And it is *these same CCMs* who have 'unreservedly' accepted the new line because the basic outlook, as we have shown, at the root of the new line is in no way different from the old outlook. It is only a shift from the cities to the villages. The blind faith in the miraculous power of 'bold lead' and 'militant action' expresses itself again in a new way. No wonder therefore that the old authors of sectarianism and adventurism have lined up behind the 'new' line.

We shall now sum up our criticism of the new line of the CC:

(1) It is a line which continues the *sectarian strategy* of the old PB, though in a modified form, as seen in the attitude towards rich peasants and middle bourgeoisie.

(2) It is a line of drawing *mechanical parallels* with China and not a line based on concrete analysis of the situation in our own country.

(3) It is a line based on *gross exaggeration* of the stage of our movement (civil war, etc.), of the maturity of the situation, of the stage of mass consciousness, of our own strength, influence and mobilising power.

(4) It is a line that *ignores the position of the working class* in our country, ignores the lessons of our history about the role of mass workingclass actions, reduces the working class to a state of passivity and in practice leads to denial of workingclass leadership itself.

(5) It is a line which, on the plea of white terror, ignores the task of working out a *concrete mass policy*, for mass mobilisation and mass action on the burning issues, facing the people—peace, civil liberties, refugee rehabilitation, agrarian reform, etc., overestimating the strength of the government and underestimating the strength of democratic forces in the country.

(6) It is a line which in the name of a 'new yardstick' ignores the lesson of Telangana, assigns to the masses the role of *passive sympathisers* and not active participants in the struggle against the government.

(7) It is a line which takes no account of the *uneven level* of our movement and seeks to work out stereotyped tactics and slogans, isolating the form of struggle from the level of the movement.

(8) It is a line which, on the plea of 'objective conditions', minimises the supreme importance of *consciousness and organisation*, minimises the importance of the party itself and does not place the rebuilding of the party and reforging of its links with the masses in the forefront of our tasks.

(9) It gives a line which ignores the *specific tasks* of *our movement* as formulated in the Cominform editorial and argues that all tasks will get fulfilled through resort to armed struggle.

(10) It is a line based on *onesided and distorted understanding* of the events of the last three years—on failure to see that the strength of the government lies in the disunity of the anti-imperialist forces and therefore takes no step to build this unity.

(11) It is a line which in the name of guerilla war advocates a *policy of adventurism* of the worst type which can only further weaken the party and strengthen our enemies.

(12) It is a line of *liquidation* of the party.

For all these reasons, we are totally opposed to the line given in the CC documents and are of the opinion that it should be rejected.

The criticism that we have made against the CC line as given in the "CC Letter" should not be taken to mean that we consider that all the formulations made by the CC to be wrong or all the documents issued by it entirely left-sectarian and adventurist. The "Report on Left-Sectarian Deviation" contains a valuable and on the whole a correct criticism of the theoretical formulations of the old PB. The Andhra document "Present Revolutionary Situation and Forms of Struggle" contains, together with mistakes, many correct formulations and directions about the way armed struggle is to be developed. The need for building mass organisations and mass movement has been stated in a number of CC documents as well as the need to combine all forms of struggle.

But we must not forget that there were many correct formulations in the documents issued by the old PB also. They also stated the need to build popular unity, to build workingclass unity, to create mass organisations ("Strategy & Tactics" document, "TU Fraction Report", etc.). Yet, as we know, all these directions remained on paper. Why?

Because the very basis of correct tactics is a correct assessment of the level of the movement, a correct analysis of the situation and correct estimation of the class forces. Tasks flow out of such an analysis. If the analysis is wrong, certain tasks, even though mentioned, will not be *emphasised* and attempt would be made to carry them out in the *wrong way*.

Ranadive argued that the government is completely isolated, that reformists are thoroughly exposed, that the situation was ripe for an 'all-India assault', and people were merely waiting for a 'bold lead'. Such an estimation of the situation could not but lead to sectarian slogans and adventurist tactics, to the conclusion that all tasks would be solved by initiation of 'direct action'.

Are not similar results bound to follow from formulations about civil war, about the situation being ripe for 'smashing the power of the ruling class', about the possi-



bility of guerilla war in the country 'as a whole'? Will this not divert attention from the immediate tasks of building a mass movement and creating mass organisations, even though these tasks are mentioned, and lead to *main concentration* on the work of organising guerilla bands and 'finishing off' the hated officials, zamindars, etc.?

We think all this is bound to happen. A wrong understanding of the situation can never lead to correct tactics, can never result in the actual implementation of even correct slogans.

### *Organisational Methods of the CC*

We have examined the CC documents at some length. We have tried to substantiate our criticism that the new CC has failed to correct the mistakes of the old PB and is in practice pursuing the same barren path of left-sectarianism and adventurism which brought disaster on the party. We have tried to show that in its assessment of the situation, in its methods of analysis, in its basic approach and in its concrete practice, the new CC has failed to make a break with the past. This in our opinion, is the reason why it has failed to solve the innerparty crisis.

Even in its organisational policy, the methods of the present CC are similar to that of the old PB. The document "Main Features of the Present Situation" (Document No 16) was placed before the ranks as a draft resolution and comrades were asked to discuss it and were informed that an "Open Forum" would be brought out to acquaint the comrades with the views of various party units. Then came two more resolutions of the PB (Documents No 19 and 20) but no "Forum". In the month of July comrades were suddenly informed that the CC had been 'reconstituted' with nine comrades of the old CC and that the new CC had adopted a 'new' line, which must now be implemented. The sole criterion for the 'reconstitution' of the CC was 'unreserved acceptance'

of its interpretation of the Cominform editorial and the advocacy and initiation of 'armed struggle' in the countryside.

In the new CC was included Somnath Lahiri, a member of the old PB who, along with the three other leaders of the PB, must bear full responsibility for the political policies and organisational decisions of the last two and a half years.

Also the comrade from Maharashtra (S. V. Parulekar) who, it is known to all, planned the most outrageous kind of terrorist action for 9th March this year (1950) and was responsible for smashing up the party in Maharashtra.

His claim that he had opposed the sectarian line of the old PB and fought for a correct line is totally false, as can be seen from the letter that he wrote to the PHQ comrades after the publication of the Cominform editorial. Scolding these comrades who had thought that the Cominform editorial demanded a change in the party line, this CCM wrote: *"I feel that the present policy does not in any way conflict with the tasks laid down in the Cominform editorial."* Further, *"they (PHQ comrades) are talking of different party line or revision of party line. This cannot be allowed."* All this shows not merely his hardened sectarianism and his refusal to accept correction even from international leaders, but also his insufferable bureaucratic outlook.

The same CC member also stated in the CC meeting of May 1950 that there are 400 party members in the Warli areas—an assertion so fantastic that it would stagger anyone who knows anything about the area. The truth is that today there is neither any movement nor any party organisation in these areas.

Two old PB members, including the general secretary, who according to the CC itself were guilty among other crimes of suppression of international documents, the most heinous crime for a communist, were merely removed from the CC and not suspended from the party. One of them, Adhikari, it is reported, has been placed in the central agit-prop committee together with Bhowani Sen, an-

other author of the policies and methods of the last two years. Finally, the provincial committees are being disbanded and organising committees formed from top, without any reference to the ranks, of the nominees of the CC who accept the new line 'unreservedly', mostly those same people who were responsible for all the mistakes and crimes of the last two and a half years and those who had accepted Ranadive's slogans also 'unreservedly'. At the head of the new trade-union fraction, we learn, is the same comrade (D. S. Vaidya) who always gave false and exaggerated reports about the position in the GIP Railway Union, who has been the most loyal lieutenant of Ranadive all these years and who even after the publication of the Cominform editorial maintained that the PB's line was correct since 'all the peasantry' did not include 'rich peasantry'.

It is necessary to quote from the "Organisational Report" of the CC itself to bring out how the CC assesses the mistakes of the old leaders and how that assessment affects its new organisational decisions.

Regarding Lahiri, an old PB member from Bengal, the report says:

"Lahiri, from a *reformist outlook* had, in the beginning, doubts about the tactical line. This was realised by the general secretary and Bhowani Sen, who considered him an utter reformist not to be relied upon to push through the left-sectarian and titoite methods of the two leaders of the PB (Bhowani Sen and the general secretary) . . . It was for this that he was virtually reduced by the PB to the position of a PC member and there too to take the responsibility of technical and organisational matters only . . . Under the circumstances, he had not much to do with the functioning of the PB and its methods.

"But gradually he began to grow into an *ardent convert to the extreme left-sectarian line*, in cases going even to *more extremes than some others*, viz his stand on Sarat Bose's election, on the April shootings in Calcutta, in his suggestions for adventurist action against the police, etc.

However he lacked both the conceit and the conviction for the left-sectarian line which the PB leaders possessed and as late as July 1949 had offered to resign from the PB" (emphasis added).

First a reformist, then an "ardent convert to the extreme left-sectarian line" who, in certain respects, "went to more extremes than others" and advocated the most adventurist types of action—such is the record of this comrade. He lacked 'conviction' for the left-sectarian line which can only mean that he was a rank opportunist, who *pretended* to be an 'ardent convert' and advocated 'adventurist types of action' to win the favour of the general secretary and to 'rehabilitate' himself in his eyes. This opportunism of a most revolting type has qualified this comrade for membership of the new CC merely because he had once "offered to resign from the PB".

About the PB member from Madras, N. K. Krishnan, the CC has to say this:

"N. K. Krishnan has been a virtual PC member for the last two years except for brief periods when he was at the centre. Hence *he had not much to do with the titoite methods of the PB* except for the anti-international attitude against the international parties and their leaders, which he admitted in his speech at his selfcriticism. But he wobbled on the issue of 9th March, took an opportunist stand with regard to the PB resolution dissolving the Tamilnadu PC secretariat and acted as the *main instrument of the PB in liquidating the party and the mass movement in Tamilnadu by using titoite-turkish methods*. The details could be got in his selfcritical report" (emphasis added).

What sense can one make of this passage? In one sentence, we are told that Krishnan "had not much to do with the titoite methods of the PB". In the very next sentence we are informed that he was "the main instrument of the PB in liquidating the party and the mass movement by using titoite-turkish methods". It must be remembered that in Tamilnadu we had the *strongest proletarian base*

in the whole country and a comrade who is responsible for smashing up this base is declared to be one who "had not much to do" with the titoite methods of the PB. Are we to conclude that merely because Krishnan's 'sphere of operation' was restricted to *one province* and not the whole country as in the case of Ranadive, he 'had not much to do' with the havoc that Ranadive's policy created when he acted as the 'main instrument' of that policy? Are we to conclude that a PB member's responsibility in the province where he had been made the supreme leader, becomes any less because he had become a "virtual PC member"?

For the 'service' that Krishnan has rendered to the party, he has been 'consulted' in forming the leading committee of Tamilnadu by the same CC which condemns him for his 'anti-international attitude', for his 'opportunism' and for his using 'titoite-turkish methods' which liquidated the party and the mass movement in Tamilnadu.

How does the CC explain this glaring contradiction between its words and its deeds? How does it justify its action in foisting on the ranks the same leaders who brought disaster on the party?

By arguing that cadres are not created in a day, that we must not treat 'cadres shabbily like dirt', that we must value 'experience' and so on. As a matter of fact, the CC is *treating* cadres 'shabbily' and like 'dirt' by imposing on them, in the name of reorganisation, the same old leaders who played havoc with the party. The 'cadres' it seems to value most are the same old left-sectarian leaders. This is our experience in Bombay also. Regarding other centres we cannot say much, but if this is how the CC wants to 'correct' the old leaders, we can only say that ruin would overtake the party in every province and every district.

No one has proposed that *all* the old leaders must be thrown out from all position. But certainly those who were *mainly* responsible for the policies and methods of the last two years cannot be kept in any position till they

have proved *by their deeds* and not merely by their 'self-criticism' that they can be trusted and till they have won back the *confidence* of the ranks.

After narrating the crimes of the PB leaders—sectarian policies, adventurist actions, terror regime inside the party, double-standard and favouritism, virtual liquidation of the CC and suppression of international documents, distortion of Lenin and Stalin—after all this, the new CC tells us that "it is wrong to characterise the PB as a trotskyite-titoite body simply because it adopted trotskyite-titoite political line and organisational methods. It is doubly wrong to characterise the PCs and DCs and other party committees as trotskyite-titoite bodies because they were reorganised by the PB or they carried out the directions of the PB. This is the formal logic of a bourgeois logician and not of a dialectical materialist".

How the question of 'dialectical materialism' arises here, the CC alone can explain. It has evaded the real issue by trying to show the distinction between 'formal logic' and 'dialectical materialism'.

No one would condemn *all* party committees wholesale and demand the total disbandment. But as far as the *main* leaders of the PB are concerned, especially the two who were guilty of suppression of international documents, the general secretary and Adhikari, the minimum that is needed is their immediate suspension from the party for an indefinite period, their cases to be reviewed after five years at least. As regards the others in the PCs, those mainly responsible must be debarred from holding any position for at least some period. Not to do even this, to emphasise the distinction between a titoite body and a body that follows titoite policies and methods, to prattle about 'dialectical materialism'—all this means to condone the worst type of antiparty crimes, to disrupt the party completely and to destroy all confidence that the party ranks have in the leadership.

The same CC that shows so much concern for the old leadership has declared in its "Letter to the PHQ Com-

rades" that those who do not accept its new line 'unreservedly' must 'stand aside' and not be in any party committee and in Bombay this 'criterion' has been laid down even for membership of the women's fraction committee.

The CC has not merely distorted the Cominform article. It has distorted and misinterpreted the international documents laying down organisational principles as well.

The "Thesis on the Structure and Organisation of Communist Parties" of the CI gives the guiding rule for the constitution of the CC as follows:

"In order to study the general political situation and gain a clear idea of the state of affairs in the party it is necessary to have various localities represented on the central committee whenever decisions are to be passed affecting the life of the entire party. For the same reason, differences of opinion regarding tactics *should not be suppressed by the central committee if they are of a serious nature. On the contrary, these opinions should get representation on the central committee...*"

This passage is quoted by the CC in its "Report on Organisational Activities". But from this clearcut direction, the conclusion that the CC draws in the very next para is:

"What should be the criterion for the election of members of the new CC?

*"Unreserved acceptance of the new line of the party."*

Further, "...the PCs, POCs, DCs and other party committees have to be reorganised from those who are at present in the committees and others outside on the following line...

*"The members accept the new line.* Those who oppose the line either from right-reformist or left-sectarian ends, have to be kept out.

"This does not mean", the CC proceeds to say, "that every syllable of the interpretation of the CC of the lead

of the information bureau should be accepted. But the agrarian revolution and the *armed guerilla struggle as the main form of struggle*, and the strategy given by the information bureau should be accepted" (emphasis added).

Thus not merely the CC but *all* party committees are being 'reconstituted' with only those who accept that '*armed guerilla struggle*' must be the main form of struggle *today*. Anybody who does not accept this is a 'right-reformist' who has to be 'kept out' from all committees.

Could distortion and dishonesty go any further? Could there be a grosser and more open violation of all principles laid down by the international communist documents than this?

It is not a secret to the CC that there are sharp differences existing today on this very issue—the issue of tactics. The CC with an appearance of magnanimity says that it does not demand agreement on 'every syllable'. But then it proceeds to lay down that not merely the strategy but also the *tactical line* formulated by it must be accepted by all who want to 'qualify' for membership of not merely the central committee but of *all* committees.

In pursuance of this 'interpretation' of the CI thesis and on the basis of this 'criterion' the Bombay and Maharashtra committees are being broken up, loyal and experienced comrades whose only crime is that they do not agree with the CC's line, are being thrown out and the committee reconstituted with the same old leaders—hardened bureaucrats, incorrigible factionalists and extreme left sectarians who dittoed all the crimes of the old PB and who have accepted the 'new' line also with equal alacrity. Even rank-and-file comrades not agreeing with the CC's interpretation of the Cominform article are being 'dropped' from the party on one pretext or another or forced into inactivity, boycotted and ignored.

What difference is there between the organisational methods of the old leadership and the new leadership? Are they not strikingly similar?



Is it any wonder that comrades in many places openly describe the new line as 'old wine in new bottle' and the organisational changes as a mere 'reshuffle'? Is it any wonder that the innerparty crisis remains unresolved full eight months after the Cominform editorial?

The present stage of affairs, if allowed to continue, will completely destroy the party. The first task of course is to work out a correct line on the Cominform article, the concrete conditions of our movement and the experience of Telangana. But that alone is not enough. We have also to evolve a correct leadership to carry out that line. Political and organisational steps have to be taken simultaneously.

The parts of the "Report on Left-Sectarian Deviation" which deal with the theoretical criticism of the old PB documents are, in our opinion, basically correct and would help the task of clarification (though certain formulations about people's democracy should be reexamined in the light of Astafyev's article). The other parts must be completely redrafted; the "Letter to the Party Ranks" must be immediately withdrawn and the line given in it nailed down as a line of petty-bourgeois revolutionism and as a distortion of the Cominform editorial. A new resolution must be prepared and placed before a specially convened party congress, consisting of *elected* delegates from the provinces.

Steps must be taken at once to convene provincial conferences and elect provincial committees.

This must, however, be preceded by:

- (1) Draft report and resolution on the situation in each province and the tasks of the party.
- (2) Removal of factionalists, left-sectarians and hardened bureaucrats from the provincial committees.
- (3) Removal of suspension and expulsion orders in case of all those who were victims of the titote methods of the old leadership, as well as open withdrawal of all wrong or exaggerated censure resolutions.

All these steps are essential.

About the first step we need not say anything, for it is obvious that no political discussion is possible on the basis of the documents issued by the CC till now. We need concrete analysis, concrete tasks, immediate slogans.

The two other steps proposed by us also should be accepted by the CC.

The CC admits that the old leadership was guilty of titoite method inside the party, that it reconstituted provincial committees with men of its choice. But if that admission has any meaning, then these same men in provincial committees cannot be trusted to prepare for party conferences in an honest manner. We are not asking that *all* of them must be removed. But certainly those who were the main supporters of the old line and old methods cannot remain in any responsible position and must be replaced by others, who enjoy the confidence of the ranks and who can be trusted to permit full and frank discussion.

Also those who were the victims of the factional and titoite methods of the leadership and were suspended or expelled from the party must be taken back. Then only we can have real provincial conference that will help to unify the party.

We are also of the opinion that P. C. Joshi must be given a party trial. We do not endorse the politics preached by him in his *Views* nor the methods he adopted after his expulsion. But it is necessary to ascertain whether the expulsion was justified or whether it was an act of vindictiveness. Further, whether his antiparty crimes are so serious as to debar him for all times from the party membership. Even if it is so, a proper trial is necessary for this would destroy any sympathy that he can evoke today by making out that he has been unjustly treated. He be asked to stop all publications and other antiparty activities, which if he refuses to do should itself be sufficient ground for confirmation of his expulsion.

*Basic Necessity—A Correct Tactical Line*

It is not possible for us to work out a new tactical line in the absence of a political-organisational report and without thorough discussion with the CC members. We shall attempt here only to broadly outline certain immediate tasks that the party has to carry out.

The "Tactical Principles of Leninism", as defined by Stalin in his "Comments on Current Affairs in China" are as follows:

"1. The principle of the necessity of taking into account the national peculiarities and the national characteristics of each nation while working out the guiding instructions of the Comintern for the workers' movement of that nation.

"2. The principle of the necessity for the communist party of every country of utilising the smallest possibilities of securing mass allies for the proletariat, even if they are temporary, vacillating, wavering or unreliable.

"3. The principle of the necessity of taking into account the truth that propaganda and agitation are not enough for the political education of millions of the masses. But that this demands the political experience of the masses themselves."

There is no doubt that despite its relative development of industry and transport, India remains basically a colonial country with a colonial economy and the laws of development of colonial revolution apply fully to India. Our revolution has to develop broadly along the same path as in China with agrarian revolution as its axis and through the creation of liberated areas in the countryside, where revolutionary armies are raised and nourished. Not merely the example of China but also the live and concrete experience of Telangana proves beyond all doubt that this is the path that the Indian revolutionary movement has to taken in order to destroy imperialist rule and achieve freedom and people's democracy.

We think however that because of the existence of a

fairly strong and centralised state apparatus in India and the developed means of transport and communication, while it is possible and *imperative* to create partisan areas and guerilla pockets of the Telangana type wherever we can, these areas, especially in the plains, will develop into a stable liberated areas when the mass movement in the greater part of the country has risen to a high level, has extended and deepened, making it impossible for the enemy to concentrate his forces at any point and assailing him from all sides. Further, that in developing the mass movement to this level and in extending it all over the country, mass actions of the working class will play a big role. Such is the experience of the revolutionary upsurge of 1945-46. That is why, while fully recognising the decisive importance of the agrarian revolutionary movement, we simultaneously stress the importance of developing mass workingclass movement.

The general tasks facing our liberation movement are:

(1) To build a broad united front of all anti-imperialist classes, parties, sections and groups with workingclass-peasant unity as its main basis against imperialists and their collaborators.

(2) To unite the working class and make the working class the leader of this front—a leadership, which will be realised by organisation of peasant struggles by the party and workers' activists, by the championship by working class and its party of the demands of all classes and leading their battles and by mass actions of the working class, political and economic.

(3) To build a mass communist party as the centre of the united anti-imperialist front and enlist in it the best elements from the working class and other fighting classes.

(4) To develop a broad peasant movement all over the country, to put this movement progressively on the rails of armed struggle, to introduce democratic reforms. In agrarian relations by mass mobilisation and direct action

as in Telangana, to create armed forces in the rural areas and strong bases for their operation.

With the progressive consolidation of people's unity, with the progressive unification of the working class and the establishment of its leadership, with the increasing strength and influence of the party and with the widening sweep of the peasant movement, more and more areas will take to the path of Telangana and armed struggle will progressively become the main form of our struggle. Also the increasing sweep of the armed struggle and the growth of our guerilla armies will increasingly forge the fighting unity of the people, give them courage and confidence, raise their fighting morale, make them look to the party and the working class for leadership.

Any attempt to isolate the tasks from one another, to stress one to the exclusion of the other, to make the formation of an all-embracing united front covering the whole country the precondition for armed struggle anywhere or to think that armed struggle of any type and anywhere will forge unity—any such attempt will lead either to relapse into reformism or to adventurism of the grossest type.

Terror, disruption and constitutionalist illusions have been the weapons used by the government against the people. But as the history of Andhra and Telangana shows, wherever the movement rises to a high level, wherever the weapons of disruption and illusion are not adequate, terror more and more becomes the *main* weapon.

This is going to happen in all parts of the country. With its growing isolation from the people, with the growing unity of revolutionary forces, with growing disillusionment among the mass of people, the government will everywhere *increasingly resort to terror as its main weapon*. And armed struggle of the people must *increasingly become their main weapon* in the battle against the government. Both the old outlook of countrywide insurrection following the general strike and also the outlook of the "CC Letter" are inadequate and therefore wrong.

The perspective is one of the movement extending and deepening, armed struggle spreading to newer and newer areas and engulfing the whole country.

But such a *general perspective* and a general statement of our task is not enough for working out a correct tactical line. That is possible only on the basis of a correct assessment of the present national-political situation in our country. We shall indicate only a few features.

As we have stated in the very beginning, one of the most characteristic features of the situation in our country is that the popular movement remains at a low level and its growth has not kept pace with the growth of popular opposition to the government. We have shown that this is due not merely to repression but also primarily to the existing disunity in the ranks of the popular forces and the prevalence of constitutionalist illusions among large sections of our people. Against the people, the government has used not the weapon of terror alone. It has also used the weapon of disruption and the weapon of creating constitutionalist illusions.

Today large masses of our people have come to realise that the present government cannot solve any of the problems facing them. They are realising the fact that without basic social changes—nationalisation of industries, abolition of landlordism, etc.—it is not possible to solve the problem of food, the problem of cloth, the problem of bare necessities of life. They see how shamelessly the government has violated every pledge it gave to the people. They want the present government to go and a new government take its place—a government which will not bow down to the vested interests.

While sweeping generalisations like 'the Congress is thoroughly exposed before the entire people' are based on exaggeration, there is no doubt that the mass base of the Congress has shrunk rapidly during the last three years. So deep is the crisis, so powerful the impact of world events, so outrageous the policies of the government, that this process, which in a normal situation would have taken

a long time, is being fulfilled in an incredibly short period. The disintegration in the Congress is itself a result and reflection of this process. Today in UP, one of the firmest bases of the Congress, thousands of congressmen are in open revolt and have already enrolled over a lakh of members in the rival People's Congress. The Workers' and Peasants' Party of Maharashtra, which broke away from the Congress, succeeded in inflicting a crushing defeat on the Congress in the Kolaba byelections and was actively supported by the village intelligentsia—teachers, etc.—who in the past had always been staunch supporters of the Congress. Other defeats suffered by the Congress, even on the basis of restricted franchise, in Calcutta, Bombay, Cochin-Travancore and in numerous municipal and district board elections tell the same story.

Need for radical measures and need for a new government to effect such measures—these have already become and are becoming part of the consciousness of larger and larger sections of our people.

But it would be a profound mistake to think that even these sections have already come to realise that the present government can only be overthrown by force, by armed action. On the contrary, the illusion that since the Congress could 'capture power' without a revolution, 'others' also can do the same—this illusion is widespread not merely in the petty bourgeoisie in towns and villages, but also in large sections of the working class. The socialists, rival Congress factions and others are utilising this illusion to strengthen their own position.

Comrades who focus attention only on economic factors and argue that the 'basic causes' that gave birth to the revolutionary upsurge of 1945-46 continue, forget the political factors that affect the consciousness of our people today, the hope and illusions that have been created by the promise of elections on adult franchise next year.

This illusion is one of the biggest realities of the present Indian situation, a reality which we can ignore only by

shutting our eyes. This is also one of the key reasons for the weakness of the popular movement.

Closely connected with this is the other reason—existing disunity in the ranks of the popular forces, disunity in the working class, disunity among the students, disunity among the peasantry, disunity of the left parties.

These weaknesses do not impose any insuperable difficulty. Other communist parties have overcome far greater difficulties. The period we are passing through is a revolutionary period. Masses are learning fast. The urge for unity is growing. If we act correctly now, it will not be long before we are able to develop a powerful mass movement and create Telanganas in many areas.

But all this will not happen spontaneously. Unity will have to be built consciously, illusions will have to be destroyed by actually leading the masses in their battles, by enabling them to see through their own experience the correctness of the slogans and tactics of the party.

There is no question of liquidating Telangana. It is a question of raising the movement in the rest of the country to the level of Telangana. It is a question of creating increasingly more Telanganas. Not by the methods suggested by the CC but by building the unity of the people and by developing a powerful mass movement against the government and its policies.

The tasks are: Strengthen the alliance between the workers and the peasants, fight for agrarian reform, build the broadest unity of the people.

It is the immediate undertaking of these tasks that will make Telanganas possible.

How are all these to be done? How is popular unity to be built? How will it develop? First and foremost, through *mass mobilisation and mass action on concrete issues facing our people and affecting their lives.*

To give form and direction to the growing mass opposition to the government and to mobilise it under our leadership, we have to work out and formulate a concrete programme which can immediately unite the progressive



forces in our country, all sections ranging from progressive congressmen to communists.

Such a programme will include:

(1) Replacement of the present government by a democratic people's government. This government must be formed directly by the people and come into existence as the result of united revolutionary struggle by all anti-imperialist classes, sections, parties and groups.

(2) Quitting the commonwealth, prohibition of the atom bomb, demand for the withdrawal of all imperialist troops from Asia (Vietnam, Malaya, etc.) and denunciation of American aggression in Korea, recognition of the Korean people's government and the democratic government of Vietnam, complete reversal of the Nehru government's foreign policy of subservience to Anglo-American imperialists as seen in the shameful stand on every issue in the UNO, including the bombing on Korean people.

(3) A policy of friendship and close cooperation with the Soviet Union, the Chinese People's Republic, the East European democracies and other democratic countries for peace, national independence of all nations, repudiation of the agreement which allows recruitment of Gurkha soldiers and their being used by imperialists.

(4) Confiscation of all foreign capital in India, nationalisation of key industries and big banks and the undertaking of a plan to industrialise the country. State aid to and encouragement of such small industries as benefit the people. Repudiation of all agreements with foreign monopoly interests that shackle our economy.

(5) Land to the tiller, no compensation to big landlords. Cancellation of peasant debts. Full aid to peasants to increase production, above all production of food.

(6) Abolition of states and their complete breaking up to form linguistic provinces. Stoppage of all privy purse for the princes, confiscation of their property.

(7) Removal from the armed forces of all Britishers and their agents. Formation of a people's army. Radical

improvement in the condition of common soldiers and common policemen.

(8) Drastic reduction in the military budget and police budget. Public trial of those guilty of terror against the people.

(9) Democratic liberties for the people. Release of all political prisoners, repeal of public safety acts, withdrawal of labour black bills, right to strike.

(10) Living wage, security of service.

(11) Compulsory and free education.

(12) A uniform policy of food procurement, with fair price to the peasant and the main contribution from the landlords.

(13) Rationing of housing accommodation. Taking over the palatial mansions to house the homeless.

(14) A special tax on the rich for refugee rehabilitation. Adequate allowance and medical facilities for the refugees.

(15) Drastic action against profiteers and confiscation of their entire property.

(16) Scrapping of the present constitution. A democratic constitution. Disbandment of the civil service. Officials elected by the people, controlled by them and subject to recall. Proportional representation.

These are only a few points. The programme has to be filled in and concretised for each province.

Such a programme will immediately rally the anti-imperialist classes, parties, groups and individuals. It is our duty and our task to make this programme, the programme of our entire people. It must be popularised most extensively from our own platform, from the platform of the united left parties, in every meeting and demonstration and while waging every mass battle. More and more these slogans must become the slogans of the fighting masses themselves.

### *Workingclass Unity and Left Unity*

Workingclass unity and the unity of the left parties will

be two most important weapons to forge the united front of the people.

"Never before in the whole history of the international workingclass movement", says the resolution of the information bureau, "has workingclass unity, both within the framework of individual countries and on a world scale, been of such decisive importance as at the present time. Unity in the ranks of the working class is necessary in order to defend peace, to frustrate the criminal designs of the warmongers and to frustrate the imperialist plot against democracy and socialism, to avert the establishment of fascist methods of domination, to offer a decisive rebuff to the campaign of monopoly capital against the vital interests of the working class and to achieve an improvement in the economic position of the working class."

Though adopted in November 1949, this resolution as far as our country is concerned has remained a dead letter. Little efforts have been made to heal the disastrous split in the workingclass movement. This is because we have not yet realised to a sufficient extent the basic causes of the split and the role that this split plays in the overall plans of imperialism.

It is not an accident that immediately after the war, both the Congress and the Socialist Party concentrated their attention on the working class and strove their utmost to split it.

"The postwar experience", says the Cominform resolution, "showed that the policy of splitting the working class occupies one of the most important places in the arsenals of tactical means and methods used by the imperialists for the unleashing of a new war, for the suppression of the forces of democracy and socialism and for lowering the standard of living of the people."

Fully conscious of the importance of the working class in India and Indian politics, the imperialists and their agents look upon workingclass disunity as one of the key weapons in their plan to transform India into their base for the domination of Southeast Asia and for launching a

war of aggression against the Soviet Union and the Chinese people. It is also one of the essential conditions for the establishment of fascist dictatorship in our country.

However, despite the efforts of the imperialists and their agents repeatedly during the last three years, the working class has doggedly fought against the government and capitalist offensive and slowed it down; repeatedly their urge for unity has expressed itself in numerous strike battles, in mass demonstrations and clashes; repeatedly rank-and-file workers of different trade unions have forged unity on their own by standing shoulder to shoulder in the face of police attacks. The present great strike in Bombay has seen innumerable instances of such joint fight.

All these show that unity can be realised, unity must be realised.

Hitherto the party has failed to transform this urge for unity into a firm reality. From time to time it has made vague general appeals for unity but such abstract appeals could achieve nothing. Sectarian approach, sectarian methods, sectarian tactics, have marked our entire trade-union work as everyone of our trade-union leaders recognises today.

What unity can the working class forge with the peasantry if it itself remains disunited? What leadership can it supply to the people if even against the industrial relations bills it cannot move unitedly? What force can the party become in national politics if it remains isolated in its own class?

One mass union in each industry, one railwaymen's federation, one united trade-union congress—these must be our slogans and these slogans must be realised in practice by the broadest unity campaign in the working class and by the establishment of *unity of action* of all workers for adequate bonus and minimum wage, against retrenchment, against the drive towards fascism and against the menace of war.

Immediate steps must be taken to establish unity with the UTUC on the basis of proposals made by them to the AITUC. Even in the ranks of the socialist workers, as the Hyderabad conference showed, the urge for unity has grown and they can and must be drawn into the unity movement.

Despite the reactionary policies of the socialist leaders and their open alliance with the American warmongers and their slandering of the Soviet Union, the socialist unions must not be placed in the same category as the INTUC unions. The socialist unions in many places have real mass membership, and honest and active working-class cadres who resent the policies of the leadership. These have to be won over for the slogan of trade-union unity by correct approach and by hard and sustained work, and by building unity in action. We have to expose before the mass of workers the Socialist Party's stand on the issue of the Korean war, the refusal of their leaders to sign the Stockholm appeal, the bureaucratic way in which they 'conduct' strikes without permitting the strikers to elect rank-and-file strike committees, the factional and antiunity stand taken by them during the Bombay textile strike and on the issue of opposition to the black bills.

Workingclass unity, we want to emphasise again, must be the core of the united national front and this unity has to be achieved with the utmost rapidity. Simultaneously the political level of the working class must be raised, it must be freed from socialist influence and moved into action in defence of the rights and interests of all classes, especially the peasantry.

It is only a united working class and a working class more and more consolidated under the banner of the party that can act as the leader of the people, halt the drive towards fascism and defeat the plans of the warmongers. The effect of workingclass unity on the middle classes, on students, on peasants, would be seen in the attracting of these classes towards the working class and also in giving a tremendous impetus to the movement for all-round

unity. Mass unions embodying the unity of the working class would be able to move the entire class into action. It would be a big weapon in achieving people's unity. We shall get thousands of active workers to go to the rural areas and lead the peasants in their battles.

Of great importance also is the unity of the left parties and groups—the Communist Party, United Socialist Party, Forward Bloc, 'Workers' and Peasants' Party and others. The realisation of this unity would go a long way in healing the split in the working class, student and peasant movements. The party must immediately take steps to convene a meeting of these groups and parties and invite also the honest elements in the Socialist Party and left congressmen. We must make a direct appeal to the Socialist Party too though we know it will not accept the proposal. It will help however to expose it before its own ranks.

What immense force left unity can generate was seen in the South Calcutta byelection when the shattering defeat inflicted on the Congress candidate shook the Congress prestige all over the country. No left party by itself is strong enough to challenge the Congress today but their united strength is immense. Not merely would it bring their existing following together, but it would also have a galvanising influence on the vast number of people who hate the Congress, but see no way to fight it and are therefore sinking into a state of passivity and despair.

Barring the Socialist Party leadership, which really is not left but an agency of Anglo-American imperialists, in all left parties, the desire for unity has grown rapidly during the last few months, especially since the appearance of the Cominform editorial. The heroic fight of the Korean people has given added impetus to this urge and almost all left parties have denounced American aggression in unequivocal terms.

It is our task and our duty to give concrete expression to their urge for unity, to formulate a concrete programme for united campaign and *united action* and to contact the

left parties. Such unity, we want to stress again, will play a big role in creating conditions for a united trade-union congress, united students' unions and united kisan sabhas as also for developing a united mass movement for peace. It will strengthen the anti-imperialist forces in the Socialist Party and draw into the movement masses of congressmen also.

This unity has to be not in the nature of a mere top agreement but above all unity for action. Also it does not mean abandonment of all criticism, but on the contrary presupposes such correct criticism as will help to expose the opportunist elements and draw the honest elements closer to us. As we know well, there are in these parties known careerists and opportunists who nevertheless have a mass following that can be only gradually won over. Many in these parties, especially in the United Socialist Party and Forward Bloc, are nothing more than bourgeois lefts who are bound to vacillate and even turn reactionary as the struggle develops and conflicts sharpen. All this demands a vigilant attitude, maintenance of the independence of the party at all costs and no merging of the party in the general left camp. It is necessary to stress this in view of the history of the past when united front with the Socialist Party led to opportunist surrender on many vital issues (1936-39).

We have to abandon the defeatist notion about the inevitability of fascism. We have to halt the drive towards fascism by mass mobilisation and mass action against every concrete manifestation of fascism, against every reactionary measure of the government. We have to unite our entire people in the struggle for civil liberties, for democratic rights.

The success achieved by the freedom of the press committee two years ago in mobilising democratic opinion against the repressive measures of the government of Bombay could have been made the startingpoint for a determined and all-embracing campaign covering the

whole country. Sectarian leadership of the party ignored this task, ignored the lessons of that mobilisation.

Opposition against the repressive measures of the government has mounted steadily and is being reflected even in a number of judgements of the high courts and supreme court (on the death sentences in Hyderabad, of the *Cross-roads* case, on the criminal law amendment act in Madras, on a number of habeas corpus petitions etc.) and in editorial comments of every bourgeois newspaper. The volume of democratic opinion in the country is immense, is growing. It is for our party and our class to mobilise it and develop it as a part of the general democratic movement.

### *Slogan of Peace—A Slogan of Mass Mobilisation*

Today with Korean towns and villages being bombed by American imperialists, the issue of struggle against warmongers has come to the forefront and dominates the scene in every country of the world. The Nehru government's shameless stand on this issue has raised sharp criticism, even among its supporters. Our people have been profoundly stirred by the heroism of the Korean people. Even newspapers like the *Times of India* have condemned the Nehru government's policy.

Nevertheless our party has been able to do practically nothing in this matter. It has failed to utilise the occasion for driving home to our people the lessons of this war, the need to forge all-in unity for peace, to develop mass opposition to the imperialists and their servitors. We have failed to give expression to the popular sympathy with Korea and popular indignation against the imperialist aggressors.

Our peace movement has, barring a few places in Punjab, remained a movement confined to our own following. Our peace 'activity' has been nothing more than holding occasional conferences, marked by sectarian slogans, hot speeches and violent denunciation of the government, combined with half-hearted signature campaign. In a most



crude and mechanical way, we have mixed up the issue of peace with every other conceivable issue and in such a manner that only those who agree with our stand on all these issues could join our 'peace movement'. We have not linked the issue of peace with the issue of the colossal military expenditure of the present government which imposes ever-growing burdens on the people, while neglecting their urgent needs. We have failed to mobilise mass opposition to the recruitment of Gurkha soldiers for murdering the patriots in Malaya. We have not made the issue of peace a live issue for our people by showing the connection between the war-drive and their own worsening conditions—civil liberties, the labour black bills, rising prices, etc.

Our All-India Peace Committee is nothing more than a body of trade-union leaders. It has not met even once since its formation. It has not issued even a statement since the beginning of American aggression in Korea. "India", as Jean Lafitte, general secretary of the World Peace Committee, said, "is a clear example of this type of *restricted peace movement*. This is hindering the harnessing of the immediate possibilities that exist in India."

American films showing the bombing of Korean towns and villages are being screened everywhere. We have not organised any protest against this. We have collected less than 300,000 signatures to the Stockholm appeal. We have produced practically no literature in Indian languages on this issue. Our leadership seems to think that since our struggle for freedom is itself a struggle against warmongers, no special importance need be attached to the peace movement, apart from this struggle. Nothing could be farther from the truth. Not merely our duty to the international democratic movement, but the interests of our own liberation movement demand a total break with this opportunist line.

With the party in its present state of isolation from the democratic masses, from the progressive intelligentsia, from elements in the Congress, from the women, the slogan

of peace can be one of the most powerful weapons to reforge our links with the people. It can be a most powerful weapon to build the democratic unity of the people and to bring together all progressive elements ranging from honest congressmen to communists on one platform. It can help us to build our contact with the rank-and-file members of the armed forces who do not want to be used by the imperialists and made cannon fodder to further imperialist policies. It can help us to mobilise women on the largest scale, among whom our influence today is very little. It can mobilise writers, artists, lawyers, doctors, journalists and other sections of the intelligentsia. It can bring all sections of workers together among whom love for the Soviet Union is great and boundless. It can unite the peasants who will have to bear new burdens in case of war and contribute men and money. It can unite the entire youth of our country.

The colossal expenditure of 170 crores of rupees for 'defence' incurred by the Nehru government, the colossal burden that this imposes on the common people, ignoring of education, health, housing by the same government, can this not be made an issue to unite the broadest sections of our people against the present government and against its policies of tying India to the war-chariot of imperialists? Will not this unity be itself a powerful weapon in our struggle for national liberation?

Even the results of the meagre efforts made by us will now show what immense possibilities exist for forging all-in unity on this issue. In Delhi, 30 members of the Indian parliament, all congressmen, have signed the peace appeal. In Punjab, a number of leading congressmen have joined peace committees. In Cawnpore, Raja Ram Shastri, a socialist MCA and a top leader of the UP Socialist Party, has signed the appeal as well as Vasudeo Prasad Misra, secretary of the city Congress committee.

To intensify these efforts, to form broadbased peace committees in all centres, to build a real peace campaign through songs, dramas, handbills, pamphlets, etc., to draw

wider and wider sections of our people into the movement—these are our tasks. We shall be taking a big step towards breaking our selfimposed isolation and towards the building of the democratic front by undertaking these tasks in right earnest.

### *Need for a Positive Attitude towards General Election*

A vital issue which we have ignored completely till now is the issue of the coming general election.

Elected on the basis of a narrow franchise (14 per cent) four years ago and by making false promises, the present legislatures in all provinces as well as in the centre have dittoed all the reactionary policies of the Congress leadership and acted as its rubber stamp. They have ceased to represent the people, they have belied all the expectations that people had, they have broken all their pledges.

Election on the basis of adult franchise was promised long ago, but this is being postponed on the plea of 'technical difficulties'. The truth is that they dare not face the people and want to perpetuate themselves in power. Till now the party has done nothing to expose the game; it has not given expression to the mass demand for an immediate election, for a free and fair election. It has ignored the issue.

"They will not hold an election. If they do, we shall fight it. But we do not want to create constitutionalist illusions by ourselves giving any slogans"—such has been the attitude of the party. This attitude has nothing to do with the Marxist-Leninist methods of leading the people, of enabling them to overcome their illusions through their own experience, of uniting the people as they are and taking them forward.

Rolls are being prepared in all provinces by government officials in a most dishonest way, leaving out millions of workers and peasants. By dishonest delimitation of constituencies and by undemocratic electoral rules—no proportional representation, etc.—the Congress is try-

ing to ensure that even if election is held, it may be returned to office again. On all this we have said nothing till now. The mass of our people in cities as well as in villages are looking forward to the election and parties like the socialists are using their expectation to strengthen their own position.

To continue our present negative attitude to the issue of election would mean to isolate ourselves even from our supporters, to doom ourselves to a state of political impotence, to hand over the masses to socialists, Congress factions and other reformists. It would mean losing a great opportunity to popularise our programme, to reforge our links with the people, to build the unity of the left parties and to develop a mass movement against the present government.

We must demand that the election must be held without delay and create irresistible opinion for this demand. We must forge unity with left parties and progressive elements that are breaking away from the Congress as also elements in the Congress to formulate a minimum programme, to make concrete proposals for proper delimitations of constituencies and proportional representation, to demand full civil liberties. Without full civil liberties, without the removal of bans on our party (Madras, West Bengal, etc.) and mass organisations, without release of political prisoners, the election will be a mockery, this consciousness has to be created. These demands can today get tremendous support from all sections of people.

The way the CC has ignored this issue, the fact that not a line occurs in any CC document on this issue, reveals sharply the blind sectarian outlook that the CC members have acquired, their complete isolation from the masses, their inability to gauge the mass mood. We would remind the CC that according to the Greek leaders, it was a mistake to have ignored the 1946 election when terror was raging in Greece and the country was actually in the midst of a real civil war.

### *Unity of Peasant Masses for Land*

It is the peasant masses that form the main force of our revolution, it is the development of their struggle that is of decisive importance for the victory of our revolution.

With the food crisis deepening and millions facing starvation and death, the issue of agrarian reform has become an issue affecting the life of every section of our people and provides a platform for achieving the broadest unity. Nowhere is the dire result of imperialist-feudal exploitation seen so clearly as in the pauperisation of the peasant masses and the rapid decline of food production. More than ever before the agrarian question has become *the* question before our people.

No class had more faith in the Congress than the peasants. No class has been more cruelly betrayed. Even the most halfhearted 'reform' bills are dragging on in various legislatures for years together and new burdens are being imposed on the peasants in the name of zamindari abolition. The eviction drive is on in every province. While the price of foodstuffs and of every necessity of life rises steeply, the peasant is being looted mercilessly under the government's procurement policies.

Our peasant unions, guided by the old PB which looked at the rich peasant as the main enemy and the middle peasant as a vacillator, failed to unite the peasant masses against these attacks and virtually liquidated themselves in practically all provinces. The All-India Kisan Sabha has ceased to exist as an organisation, its leading committees have not met for years together, the provincial kisan sabhas exist only on paper in most provinces. In a period when they needed it most, the peasants have been deprived of leadership and guidance.

It is in the rural areas that the government is potentially the weakest, it is here that the decisive battles will develop, it is here that we have to develop partisan areas and liberated areas, and destroy the power of the im-

perialists bit by bit. The army, recruited mostly from the peasantry, will also start wavering and cracking as the battle extends and grows. It is of utmost necessity therefore that the present weakness of ours in the countryside is overcome and a mass peasant movement built, mass kisan sabhas organised and a strong volunteer organisation created. This alone will create the basis for armed guerilla struggle of the Telangana type.

A strong peasant movement, uniting the peasant masses and covering a big area, is essential for the development of guerilla struggle. Without such a movement, armed struggle can be of no other character than sporadic attacks on landlords and moneylenders. Also, if the area is too small, the guerillas will have no place to retreat in face of police and military offensive and will be annihilated.

To build a mass peasant movement, uniting all sections of the peasantry is therefore our immediate task. Special attention has to be paid to the poor peasants and agricultural workers who together form the overwhelming majority of the rural population and who alone can be the core and the driving force of the agrarian struggles and the firmest ally of the working class.

Tens of thousands of former active supporters of the Congress in the rural areas can be drawn into the kisan sabhas and their cooperation secured, as well as the cooperation of the Workers' and Peasants' Party, of honest elements from the Congress and the Socialist Party, to build a mass kisan movement round the central slogan of 'Land to the Tiller' and for immediate demands like 50 per cent reduction of rent and revenue, no evictions, no feudal levies, fair price, living wage for agricultural labourers, etc. We must formulate a concrete agrarian programme for each province, popularise it extensively among all sections of the people and forge unity with all democratic elements to build a united kisan sabha and put this programme into effect.

This programme cannot be realised by agitation and propaganda alone. Direct action by the peasant masses—

refusal to pay rents and levies, seizure of land, and the defence of such action by armed guerilla struggle will have to become increasingly the main feature of the agrarian movement as the movement rises to higher and higher level, as peasant unity gets strengthened and as their consciousness and militancy grows. The whole movement will have to be firmly led from stage to stage and directed to the path of armed struggle as the situation in different areas matures.

Another task of vital importance is the winning of extensive popular support for the struggle in Telangana and other areas where we wage guerilla struggle.

It is necessary today, taking into account the existing level of our movement and the stage of mass consciousness, that in our propaganda and agitation we adopt a correct attitude and make a correct approach. We have to stress the *defensive* aspect of the Telangana struggle, the *justness of the demands* for which the peasants are fighting, the *conditions* which forced them to take to arms, and the *atrocities* that are being committed by the government forces. We have to rouse our entire people against the government by emphasising these points.

Not that we are organising guerilla struggle to overthrow the government, but that the atrocities of the government have compelled the people to take up arms to defend their lives, their property and the honour of their wives, mothers and daughters, their right to the land they till—this basic point must be emphasised again and again and brought home to our people through pamphlets, through visits of democratic nonparty men to these areas, through formulation of concrete demands, etc. To ignore all these tasks on the plea that this is 'reformism' is to doom Telangana to isolation.

The same must be done about every area where we wage such struggle. Not merely guerilla struggle is to be undertaken on the basis of active popular support, active peasant support and the level of the movement in the area, but support and sympathy for these struggles must

be consciously won even from those sections all over the country who do not yet realise the necessity for armed struggle for the overthrow of the government.

The Telangana defence committee must be broadened to include as many nonparty progressive elements as possible. There is no doubt that people can be roused on this issue and their support won if we abandon the present sectarian approach and sectarian methods. It is a matter of shame that while the people of Poland have sent 200 pounds for the defence of Telangana comrades, we are unable to collect more than a few thousand rupees for our own people.

On this, as well as on other issues like peace, American aggression in Korea, we have been guilty of underestimation of the volume of democratic opinion in the country, underestimation of the possibilities of mass mobilisation, failure to shed sectarianism and evolve slogans and tactics which will enable us to translate these possibilities into realities. Fear of committing 'reformist deviations', fear of association with the reformists, fear that we are abandoning the 'straight path of bolshevism' grips our leadership and our ranks.

#### *For Unity of all Fighting Classes & all Sections*

Our comrades in the All-India Students' Federation have to take the lead in uniting the student masses and increasing conditions for a single united student organisation. We transformed the AISF into a narrow sect of communist students. From the Students' Federation platform we denounced every congressman as reactionary and went to the length of condemning all left parties and all student organisations other than the AISF. The opposition that the government agency 'National Union of Students'\* has evoked from the Students' Congress organisa-

\* A post script to this document says: Our characterisation of the NUS as a government agency in this note was based on old information. In view of the happenings at the recent session of the NUS at Bombay, our whole approach towards the NUS will have to be changed.



tions in Bengal, UP and Kerala, the united fight of the student masses of Gwalior which won the support of all sections of people, led to student actions in many places, and compelled the government to retreat, the common demand being voiced by students for lowering of fees, for adequate grant to educational institutions, for adequate hostel accommodation, etc.—all these go to show not merely how urgent is the need for unity, but also how great its possibilities. The victory of the Chinese people and the aggression in Korea have profoundly stirred the student masses and heightened their consciousness. Once active participants in all the struggles led by the Congress, the student masses in the last three years have again and again defied bans and staged militant demonstrations. Their actions have played a major role in exposing the real face of the Congress rulers. Not merely for fighting for their own demands, but also on the issue of peace, on the issue of civil liberties, they can be united and led forward.

Besides student actions, the last three years have witnessed big strikes of clerks, office employees, lowergrade government servants and teachers, including the 20,000-strong strike of the district board and municipal teachers of UP. With prices rising rapidly and with largescale retrenchment in all firms and government departments, their conditions are rapidly becoming desperate. These elements can be a powerful ally of the proletariat, they can also be enlisted in the army of fascism. It is a matter of grave concern that due to the absence of workingclass unity and the absence of left unity, which could galvanise them, and due to the scant attention paid by us, thousands of these elements have joined and are joining the openly fascist RSS which declares extermination of Muslims and war against Pakistan as the solution of their problems. It is essential that the working class and its party actively champions their demands about adequate wage, housing, education of their children, etc., organises them in mass

unions, carries on intensive campaign among them against all reactionary ideologies and wins them over.

We have to intervene actively on every issue affecting the life of our people and build their unity for action. We have to formulate concrete demands for the victims of flood and the Assam earthquake, for the people in famine areas and over and above all, for securing food for our people. Today the issue of food has become one of the main and most important issues for our country. The slogans given in the *Crossroads* of 15 September are fully correct and must be carried out by mass mobilisation and direct action of the people against profiteers and food hoarders—unhoarding their stock and taking possession of it to feed the hungry wherever we are in a position to do so. The government must be made to declare the starvation areas of Bengal, Bihar and Madras as famine areas and take the responsibility of feeding the people. The military budget must be reduced by 50 per cent to import food for the people, especially from the Soviet Union and other democratic countries. The seizure of land by the peasantry in Telangana must be recognised and land handed over to the tiller in all areas to solve the food crisis. We have to organise hunger-marches and demonstrations in unity with other anti-imperialist forces for those demands.

We have to conduct an all-sided exposure campaign against the present government and its policies on all international and national issues—Korea, food, black-marketeering and profiteering, bogus integration and merger of states, shameful deals with foreign interests, starving educational institutions while swelling police budget, living wage, agrarian reform, callous disregard for the refugees, and on each and every issue formulate concrete demands and slogans.

We have to conduct determined struggle against the rightwing socialists, expose their policies concretely and show how they are serving the imperialists and their collaborators, while simultaneously establishing fraternal

rélations with their ranks who are becoming more and more critical of these policies.

We have to transform our newspapers into real mass newspapers, conducting all-sided exposure of the government, reporting every crime against the people, full stories of corruption, shady deals and of the conflicts inside the Congress, establishing correspondence service in every centre so that the papers report not merely our activities but reflect the rising tide of the mass movement against the government and its policies. The papers can and must become powerful levers for building left unity, democratic unity of the people and unity of the working class. The very fact that this is a period of growing radicalisation and the circulation of our papers has not merely not increased, but has in many cases gone down, shows how we have failed to run them properly.

We have to create mass literature in Indian languages to meet the ever-growing demand for information about the Soviet Union, about People's China, about the people's democracies, about events and happenings in our own country and abroad. How criminally we have failed in this can be seen from the fact that we closed down the *Indo-Soviet Journal*, our FSU activities are at a standstill and we have produced practically nothing in Indian languages about China and Vietnam and even about Korea. The need is for cheaply-priced pamphlets, streams of pamphlets and their wide sale.

We have to undertake immediate work among the refugees, formulate demands about their resettlement and education of their children, collect funds for their needs. We have to defeat the efforts of communalist reactionaries to use their miseries for their own ends.

We have to support actively the demand for linguistic provinces and forge unity with the Congress and other elements for this purpose. We have to get rid of the idea that everyone connected with the Congress is a counter-revolutionary. On the contrary every effort must be made to draw congressmen and those breaking away from the

Congress into the movement for peace, for friendship with the Soviet Union and People's China, for food, for civil liberties, etc.

We have to popularise the Soviet Union and its achievements on the most extensive scale and among all sections of our people. The FSU must be made a really broad movement and the *Indo-Soviet Journal* must be restarted and a mass drive launched for the selling of literature on the Soviet Union. Also articles from the *People's China* must be translated and brought out in pamphlet form in all languages.

We must also formulate concrete demands affecting the life of the soldiers and armed forces in general and make them a part of our platform.

Inevitably the forms of struggle will vary from place to place, depending on the nature of the issue, the degree of people's unity. For example, in one place we may be able to assert the right to hold meetings by militant defiance of bans and wrest civil liberties temporarily, at another we may not be able to do anything more than a peaceful protest. At one place we may be able to unearth the hoarded stock and distribute foodgrains among the people, at another we may have to adopt the method of demonstration alone. Due to the very nature of the period however and due to the growing radicalisation of the masses, resort to higher and higher forms of struggle will be both necessary and possible.

We have stated earlier that armed struggle must increasingly become the main form of our struggle. that this struggle must be spread all over the country as the situation matures and our own strength grows...\*

The imperialists, we must never forget, are in a desperate situation and will adopt desperate measures to maintain themselves in power. While not resigning ourselves to the inevitability of fascism, while fighting deter-

\* There is a defect in the cycloed manuscript and some lines seem to be missing.

minedly to win civil liberties, while making full use of all legal possibilities, we must never forget the nature of the period. Never again we must allow ourselves to be taken by surprise as we were after the second party congress. Every measure must be taken to keep unexposed a large part of the cadres of the party, especially the new recruits. The underground organisational and technical apparatus has to be strengthened a hundredfold in order that the party may function, may maintain its links with the masses and lead them even in the midst of worst terror. While it is stupid to reduce the question of struggle against the government to merely a question of technique and military tactics, we must never forget also that in a colonial country it would be suicidal to ignore the tremendous importance of these factors. The struggle to build the united front of the people itself demands that our links with the masses are maintained in all situations, that we are able to create a force to defend the people in face of attacks from the enemy, that we are able to deliver repeated blows against the enemy, basing ourselves on active mass support and on the rising mass movement.

This is where we differ from those who would liquidate all militant struggles today and who visualise a period of peaceful preparation ahead.

We maintain that the *immediate task* before the party in the *greater part of the country* is to develop a mass movement, create mass organisations and build mass unity, which alone would create the basis for real armed struggle.

This is where we differ from the present CC line which, as we have said, puts the cart before the horse by advancing guerilla war all over the country.

The perspective of armed struggle will be realised only if we abandon all complacency, all illusions both of a reformist and of a revolutionary romantist nature, only if we mobilise and lead the masses in their immediate battles and build their unity and their organisation.

On every occasion, on every issue and in every place,

the Communist Party has to come out as the party of people's unity and people's struggle, as the builder, organiser and champion of the people's battles. We have to transform the people's hatred against the government and their urge for a new life into a mass movement to end the present regime and establish real freedom and democracy. We have to unite all the little streams of opposition to the government into one mighty torrent, into the revolutionary struggle for a people's democracy.

### *For a Mass Party*

We have formulated some of the immediate tasks facing the party. But in the forefront of all tasks stands the task of reunifying and rebuilding the party itself, the task of transforming it into a mass party. The nature of the period we are passing through, the nature of the period ahead, makes this our supreme task.

The Bombay textile strike has galvanised the working class all over the country. The sympathetic strikes in Calcutta, Cawnpore and other centres, the colliery workers' strike in Bihar, the militant strike in Indore, show that a big strike wave is rising again. Clashes are being reported from rural areas. Masses of hungry people have already in some areas taken possession of profiteers' hoards. Despite the lack of unity, lack of leadership, lack of organisation, the people are moving into action spontaneously, driven by hunger, driven by intolerable conditions of life. Wherever one goes, one sees clear indications of the coming storm.

The crisis is maturing fast. Big upheavals, gigantic battles are ahead.

But, as the history of our national movement has proved again and again, the upsurge, no matter how powerful, will spend itself in a series of unorganised clashes, dissipate its strength in uncoordinated battles and will be ultimately betrayed and crushed unless the party has *already* entrenched itself in the masses, has forged its links with them and has a clear perspective. We shall be

taken by surprise by the volume and force of the avalanche, overwhelmed by the political and organisational tasks that will face us and be compelled to trail behind the events if we do not act correctly right now, win the leadership of the masses *today*, unite them through a correct mass policy round our banner and transform ourselves into a mass party.

We have to discard the ridiculous notion that even if we remain isolated from the masses today, they will flock round our banner 'when the time comes' because by then all other parties will have discredited themselves and we shall appear before the people as the only revolutionary party. We have to realise that if we do not win the leadership of the masses *today* by a correct mass policy, by leadership of day-to-day battles and by patiently building up mass organisations and a mass party, we shall be able to do nothing in the coming period.

Only a mass party can lead the mass upsurge. Only a mass party can build people's unity. Only a mass party can organise armed struggle on a big scale and in an effective manner. This is the key lesson we have to learn from the glorious history of the Chinese revolution.

As Dimitrov said in his historic report at the seventh world congress of the Comintern: "In the struggle for the establishment of the united front, the importance of the leading role of the communist party increases extraordinarily. Only the communist party is at bottom the initiator, the organiser and the driving force of the united front of the working class.

"The communist parties can ensure the mobilisation of the masses of toilers for a united struggle against the offensive of fascism and the offensive of capital *only if they strengthen their own ranks in every respect*, if they develop their initiative, pursue a Marxist-Leninist policy and apply correct flexible tactics, which take into account the concrete situation and the alignment of class forces."

These words of Dimitrov not merely retain their validity to this day, they are of special significance for us in

view of the situation in our country and the state of our party.

Dimitrov was ignored by the old PB. The party for them was merely a *shock-brigade* and not the vanguard of the masses, not the leader, the organiser and the driving force of the united front against the imperialists. When 'analysing' the situation, they forgot that the party is the most vital factor in the 'situation' itself; its strength, its influence, its striking power, the decisive force that would determine the fate of the whole battle.

Party-building has always been the task most neglected by us. Even when we led big mass battles all over the country, we could not draw more than a minute fraction of them into the party. Thousands of militant workers and peasants thrown up by every struggle, men with initiative, capacity for leadership, courage and spirit of self-sacrifice were drawn towards the party, but could not be enlisted in the party and absorbed. The party therefore always suffered from lack of cadres.

One of the basic reasons for this is our failure to conduct *intensive political education* among our cadres, supporters and sympathisers. Barring Andhra, and to a certain extent Bengal, the work of party education has never been even seriously undertaken.

Study of classics, completely ignored in the period of reformism, is of course a key factor in raising the level of consciousness of cadres. But that by itself is not enough. We have to study intensively the history of our own struggles, of the battles led by us, of mass fights that have taken place in our own country. We have to draw lessons from these struggles. Then only ranks can be educated and can acquire experience.

Our trade-union cadres today know nothing except of the struggles in which they have been direct participants. They know nothing of the great strikes of Bombay, Calcutta and other centres of the past and their lessons. We have not produced any literature on the trade-union movement in India. We have not produced the history of the



great tebhaga battle, the north Malabar peasant movement, the great fights in Andhra and the uprising in Telangana. The priceless lessons of these movements, lessons learned in the battlefield itself, have not been made part of the consciousness of the whole party but have remained confined only to the actual participants, and that too in a vague general way. Comrades in one centre have learned nothing from the struggles of another centre. New cadres have had to start work every time afresh, without the guidance that the rich experience of the past can supply. We seldom review the movements of our people and even when we do—the reports on the peace movement, the workingclass and student movement in the *Communist*—they are full of vague generalisations, gross exaggeration and high-sounding phrases and therefore do not teach anything.

A break has to be made with all this, the *Communist* our theoretical organ, has to be conducted not merely on the basis of reprints of international articles, but has to review the situation in our own country and the actual progress of our own movement. Then only can it teach our cadres. Also we have to prepare reports and reviews of our past struggles. Without this we shall never be able to train our cadres.

The old PB not merely ignored the task of building the party. It followed a policy of systematically smashing it up. It poisoned the whole innerparty atmosphere and destroyed all mutual confidence. It shattered the moral fabric of the party by demagoguery, by lies and by terror.

This is where we have to start from.

We have made a number of suggestions in our note on the "Crisis in our Party" and we request the CC to seriously consider them. We feel that the appointment of control commissions in all provinces to review the cases of comrades against whom action was taken by the PB is a matter of vital importance. The question is not whether the CC is convinced about the correctness and justice of any action. The task is to convince all comrades and sym-

~~pathisers~~ that a clean break is being made with the past methods. The task is one of restoring confidence and discipline.

Abstract appeals for unity, for discipline and referring to clauses of the party constitution, these will not achieve the purpose of restoring confidence and reunifying the party. The manner in which the 'reconstitution' of the CC was done, the inclusion in the new CC at least of two of the old CC comrades guilty of worst mistakes and even crimes, the failure to take suitable action against the authors of the titoite-turkish terror regime inside the party, the 'reorganisation' of provincial committees with only those who agree with the CC's interpretation of the Cominform article, the decision to call a plenum of the CC's nominees—these are not steps which help in creating confidence. To this day the CC has not given the party its analysis of the political situation in the country or a political-organisational report and yet it wants comrades in all committees to 'unreservedly accept' the new line!

The decision of the PB to recommend to the CC that a party congress should be called is welcome. This decision should have been taken long ago. We have already expressed the opinion that the congress should be preceded by provincial conferences—conferences convened on the basis of a concrete political-organisational report in each province and not merely to discuss the "CC Letter".

In order that the party congress may really unify the party and not be the startingpoint for renewed innerparty struggle, the following steps must be taken *immediately*:

(1) A concrete analysis of the political situation in our country must be made, a tactical line on its basis worked out and placed before the comrades for discussion.

(2) No attempt should be made to implement the line given in the "CC Letter", which should be withdrawn.

(3) Immediate slogans must be given for rebuilding trade-union unity, kisan unity, student unity and for developing a mass movement on the issues facing the people—

Korea, peace, civil liberties, Telangana, food, agrarian reform, minimum wage, elections, etc.

(4) Ranadive and Adhikari must be suspended from the party, the CC members from Bengal and Maharashtra removed from the CC and also the comrades mainly responsible for the mistakes for the last two and a half years from PCs.

(5) Control commissions must be appointed in all provinces to review the cases *rapidly* in order to enable the largest number of comrades to take part in the party conferences and congress. All wrong decisions of the old PB and other committees must be openly withdrawn immediately to restore confidence and to create a healthy atmosphere inside the party. No attempt must be made to minimise the crimes and mistakes of leading comrades as has been done in the "Organisational Report".

(6) The leaders of the international communist movement must be informed about the serious situation in the party. Their fraternal assistance must be sought at once for an authoritative interpretation of the Cominform article and the tasks facing the party in India.

Only the immediate undertaking of these tasks will help us to solve the crisis and create the basis for successful convening of the party congress.

We have already wasted eight months. The situation brooks no delay. Any further drift will cause disaster.

We hope the CC will pay serious attention to the criticism we have made and to the proposals we have placed before it. We are confident that if we take the correct steps at once, we can undo the harm caused by the last two and a half years' policies with the utmost rapidity, unify our class and lead our people in the battle for democracy and freedom.

The situation, we repeat, brooks no delay. Reeling under the blows of the heroic Korean people, the imperialists have become more desperate and are striving to spread

the flames of war. Inside India, the forces of counterrevolution are consolidating their ranks. The election of the arch-reactionary and communalist Tandon to the presidency of the Congress is an ominous pointer. It presages acceleration of the drive towards fascism, increasing resort to communal disruption and all-out offensive against the forces of revolution.

We have to act and act at once. The forces of the people are immense. But they have to be unified, they have to be consolidated, they have to be led firmly. Our party and our party alone can fulfil this task.

## **VII**

# **Indian People's Democratic Revolution And the Communist Party of India**

### **V. NEW STRATEGY BASED ON THE NEW ALIGNMENT OF CLASS FORCES**

An objective economic and political analysis of the new class alignment of forces after the Mountbatten award reveals that the imperialists, the native big business, the feudal princes and landlord class stand in one camp and opposing it stand the working class, the peasantry, the petty bourgeoisie and the middle bourgeoisie. The former bloc is interested in the maintenance of the present colonial slave order of exploitation and is completely hostile to the people's democratic revolution, while the latter is interested in complete national independence and people's democracy.

The place and the role of each class that is interested in the people's democratic revolution is naturally determined by the objective economic position that each of them occupies in the existing social set up, i.e. relations of social production. Keeping this in view, it is necessary to state which class or classes form the revolutionary force and their relative significance in the revolution.

The proletariat as the most advanced class of modern society is a thoroughgoing revolutionary class. The working class,

A draft policy statement was issued by the polit bureau on 15 November 1950. This document of 108 cyclostyled pages consists of 13 chapters. Here we are reproducing only chapters 5, 6, 7 and the first section of chapter 8—all dealing with strategy and tactics.

by the very position it occupies in production, is bound to be and capable of organising itself quickly and efficiently to fight effectively and consistently for democracy and socialism.

The Indian proletariat is *numerically* the strongest of all the semicolonial and colonial countries of the world. It has entered the political arena actively decades ago and has been playing all along a very important role in the struggle for freedom and national independence. It is also an organised and politically conscious force.

The Indian proletariat, a great part of which has been very closely connected and has natural affinity with the mass of the peasantry, finds it easy to form a close alliance with them and hence best suited to lead the agrarian revolution—the axis of the colonial revolution.

On the top of all, the Indian proletariat, which is oppressed and crushed by the imperialists, the native big bourgeoisie and the feudal landlords, is vitally interested in and quite capable of a resolute and thoroughgoing revolutionary struggle against this combine. The Indian working class is fully aware that its liberation is inseparable from national liberation and no basic improvement of its social status and working conditions can be achieved without first and foremost winning genuine national independence and people's democracy.

Hence the proletariat, with the Communist Party at its head as its vanguard and organised detachment, is alone the most determined and devoted fighting force for national liberation and is historically destined to be the leader of this struggle for national and real independence.

Besides the working class, the peasantry constitutes the largest revolutionary class in the people's democratic front. The pre-dominance of oppressive feudal and semifeudal relations in the countryside, the imperialist and monopolist stranglehold on the agrarian economy make the peasantry vitally interested in the agrarian revolution—the axis of the colonial revolution. Therefore the peasantry represents the main force of the agrarian revolution, which is the main and chief content of the present phase of the people's democratic revolution.

It is evident that feudal and semifeudal relations on land still continue to dominate our rural economy, acting as a powerful

obstacle for the capitalist development of the country, as a consequence of which the class differentiation of the peasantry is also proceeding at a comparatively slow rate. Nevertheless it is to be noted that imperialism has included the Indian village in the system of capitalism, with its taxation, trade apparatus, etc., and capitalist relations have developed and are still in the process of development. But it must be made clear that this development of capitalism and capitalist relations have their own distinct features, different from those of the independent and free capitalist countries. The capitalism that has so far developed and is developing in the typically colonial land of ours, does not smash the precapitalist and feudal forms of bondage and exploitation of the peasantry but only gives the latter a monetary expression which worsens still more the conditions of the peasantry; this capitalism adds new burdens on the peasant masses of our country without removing any of the old burdens of feudal and semi-feudal forms of exploitation.

Failure to understand this characteristic feature of colonial capitalism has led our party in the past to commit serious mistakes and would land us in future in many erroneous conclusions and deviations if we do not draw proper lessons from the past. The right-opportunist school of thought refused to take note of the development of capitalism in our countryside and the painful class differentiation that has been taking place among the peasantry. It proceeded under the dogmatic assertion that under the imperialist rule and feudal and semifeudal fetters on land, capitalism in the countryside had not at all developed and class differentiation among the peasantry had not taken place. It considered the entire peasantry as still a homogeneous mass and failed to separately organise agricultural labour and lead their wage struggles etc. and allowed the rich peasant sections to entrench in the leadership of the kisan movement, resulting in paralysation and sabotage of the progress of the agrarian revolution.

The left-sectarian school of thought swung to the other opposite end and dogmatically asserted that capitalist development in our agriculture is nothing different from the capitalism of any developed, independent, capitalist country. It had erroneously asserted that capitalism in our agriculture which had 'already

developed' and 'fast developing' had smashed the domination of the precapitalist and feudal relations and that capitalist relations have become dominant. As a result the rich peasant was looked upon as the 'spearhead of counterrevolution' and capitalist and feudal landlordism was given a clean bill; the agrarian revolution was not considered as mainly antifeudal and antilandlord but principally as anticapitalist and antirichpeasant. It had failed to take note of the essentially different conditions of our colonial agricultural workers from those of the developed capitalist countries, stressed exclusively on the wage-demands of the agricultural workers and deliberately neglected the united fight of the peasantry against the feudal and semifeudal bondage for land etc. Thus it led to disruption of the revolutionary peasant front and sabotaged the agrarian revolution.

We have to fight these two deviations and correctly understand that, in spite of the developed and developing capitalism and capitalist relations in the countryside, feudal relations are still prevailing and the antifeudal agrarian revolution with the slogan of land to the tiller stands as the main and immediate task before the Indian democratic revolution.

Nonetheless the peasantry does no longer represent a homogeneous mass and class differentiation has taken place, based on the developing market relations leading to the formation of different groups such as agricultural worker, poor peasant, the middle peasant and a narrow stratum of rich peasantry. Quite in consonance with this class differentiation, the agricultural worker, who has neither land at all or possesses a tiny plot nor implements of production, with no guarantee of employment for a greater part of the year in the disintegrating sector of agrarian economy and holding no promises of being absorbed by the country's industrial sector which is fettered and restricted by imperialist economy, groaning under all kinds of capitalist and precapitalist forms of exploitation, and slowly dying from want and privation, famine and disease, is the typical phenomenon of the Indian village. These agricultural workers, together with the poor peasantry and tenant cultivators, who are equally subjected to ruthless feudal and semifeudal as well as capitalist forms of exploitation, form the biggest single group which can be the firm



ally of the proletariat in the people's democratic revolution and capable of acting as the spearhead of agrarian revolution.

The middle peasantry in the countryside is another revolutionary group which either as tenants or owners suffer both at the hands of usury-capital, and feudal and semifeudal land relations. The majority of this group groaning under the terrible system of exploitation has little chance of prosperous living and is steadily and slowly getting reduced into the stratum of the poor peasantry. It is only a small section of them that has some chance in certain conditions of growing into rich peasant status. The middle peasantry in general does not exploit others though a section amongst them may be hiring agricultural labourers and lending out small amount of credits etc. On the other hand, this group as a whole is exploited by imperialism, feudalism and native big-bourgeoisie and is capable of resolutely taking part in the anti-imperialist and agrarian revolution. Therefore the entire middle peasantry forms a good revolutionary force and constitutes a reliable ally of the proletariat. The importance of this ally is not only confined to this stage of revolution but also to the future socialist stage.

Next comes the rich peasantry. This section too is in general interested in the slogan of 'abolition of landlordism' and 'land to the tiller'. It is possible to carry this section also in the present stage of our revolution which is essentially antifeudal, anti-imperialist and antimonopolist.

The proletariat, in its bid for an alliance with this section in the people's democratic revolution, must bear in mind all its characteristics and make a correct approach. Firstly, this class is, by its very nature, orientated towards capitalism and exploitation. Secondly, the rich peasant is an exploiter of wage-labour, notwithstanding the manual labour he performs on his farm. Thirdly, a certain section of the rich peasantry is also in the habit of practising usury, rackrenting and other accompanying feudal and semifeudal forms of exploitation. These characteristics would determine the nature of the fight they put up against the feudal, landlord relations and imperialism, their vacillations and opposition, sometimes in the case of certain sections openly lining up with the present counterrevolutionary ruling clique. The fact that the rich peasantry in general is interested in the

slogan of land to the tiller does not warrant the proletariat to forget that this section, as an exploiter of the agricultural labour, is hostilely disposed to the wage struggle of the agricultural proletariat. These characteristics of the rich peasant—that of his hostile disposition to the struggles of the wage-worker and his orientation to the capitalist class as the peasant bourgeoisie and in certain cases, in some degree or other, his method of feudal exploitation would determine his conduct in the revolutionary camp. It is dangerous to allow this group and its representatives to entrench themselves in positions of authority in the revolutionary kisan movement, i.e. the peasant committees, land committees and the village people's committees etc. without ensuring in them a preponderance of the toiling peasantry. The proletariat and the Communist Party, while on one hand, allying with the rich peasantry in the fight against landlords and imperialism, must constantly expose before the peasant masses its vacillating role and free them from its political influence.

Another important factor to be taken note of, while approaching the question of the rich peasantry, is that a certain section of it, however numerically small, comes mainly under the category of feudal exploiters. Such rich peasants, the greater of whose total income is derived from rackrenting, usury and trading and who have got strong social and political links with feudal and semifeudal landlord class, are not to be considered as allies. The question however is not to be decided merely by the fact that they are, in some measure or other, connected with feudal exploitation—because in the typically backward colonial economy of our country, such connections in some small degree with feudal exploitation are observed in greater number of the rich peasants and to some extent in a section of the middle peasantry also—but by the fact of the predominance of feudal exploitation and their opposition to the revolution.

The people's democratic revolution, in the stage of the anti-imperialist, antibigbusiness and antifeudal agrarian struggle, does not set itself the task of confiscating and distributing the lands of the rich peasantry, that leads to the liquidation of the rich peasant institution. The question of confiscation and distribution arises with regard to those individual elements who play the role of leaders and organisers of the butcher gangs of imperial-

ist and feudal reaction. Such is the perspective of the alliance with the rich peasantry in the anti-imperialist and antifeudal agrarian revolution.

After the peasantry comes the various categories of the petty bourgeoisie. It comprises of handicraftsmen, small producers, students, teachers, low-paid employees, intellectuals, free professionals and the urban poor. All these sections have been oppressed by the present ruling bloc of imperialism, big bourgeoisie and feudal landlords. They are acutely hit by the soaring rise in prices, exorbitant house-rent, constantly menacing threat of unemployment, lack of educational facilities, low salaries and all types of social insecurity under the present order and are genuinely interested in the overthrow of the present ruling clique and the establishment of genuine democratic order. Hence the petty bourgeoisie is one of the important forces of the revolution and a reliable ally of the proletariat. The revolutionary energy that this class has displayed in numerous and heroic anti-imperialist struggles in the recent past also reveals its revolutionary potentialities in the struggle for national liberation.

It is only under the leadership of the proletariat that the petty bourgeoisie can secure its emancipation. The proletariat and the Communist Party have to correctly approach each section of this class, organise it and lead it to the revolution.

And lastly, comes the question of the middle bourgeoisie. The middle bourgeoisie is that section which has either fewer links or no links with imperialists and the big bourgeoisie which has not only politically formed a bloc with imperialists but also entered into economic deals through largescale fusion of its capital. The middle bourgeoisie is *mainly* dependant on its own medium or small industries or business concerns and the *major* part of whose income is derived from these concerns—but not from either landlord exploitation or shares in the imperialist concerns and the Indo-British joint companies. The middle bourgeoisie suffers from the cut-throat competition of the imperialists and monopoly capital and does not share political power with them.

In certain circumstances and to a certain extent, this group of middle bourgeoisie, under the basically colonial character of

our economy and political setup, is capable of playing a revolutionary role. Imperialism, native monopoly capital and feudalism, whom the people's democracy sets as its main and immediate target of attack are also in a way the enemies of this section. The cut-throat imperialist competition for markets and the stranglehold of feudal-agrarian relations that impede the development of the home market and cripple it, not only stand in the way of advancement of this class but also become a menace threatening its existence.

Although this section suffered under the serious illusion of bettering its lot under the present order and basically supported the anticommunist and antipeople repressive policies of the reactionary rulers in the first period after 15 August, the daily increasing blows of the deepening economic crisis are shattering its hope and an increasing discontent is also witnessed. The growing discontent and disillusionment with the devastating policies of the ruling clique on the one hand and the increasing confidence and faith roused by the fighting proletariat and its allies in the democratic front on the other may be able to win it for the people's democratic front. The fight for this ally has to be carried on on two fronts. The proletariat and the Communist Party, while on the one hand unhesitatingly championing its just demands against imperialism and monopoly capital and defending the institution of middle capital, wherever the power of people's democracy is set up, would be vigilant on the other to fight to foil its attempts to shift the burden of the crisis on to the shoulders of the working people.

The middle bourgeoisie which is not opposed to and objectively interested in the agrarian revolution, as it will facilitate the freer supply of raw materials to its industry and provide a stable home market, is also in favour of the formation of linguistic provinces and the selfdetermination of various nationalities who are today denied their just rights by foreign imperialism and its ally, chiefly Gujarati-Marwari monopoly capital. The decisive lead of the proletariat in carrying out the agrarian revolution and all the national-liberation struggles of the oppressed nationalities in India can be an additional factor by which this section can be swung over to the democratic front.

Before we close this question of the middle bourgeoisie we would like to point out that it is erroneous to characterise the entire bourgeoisie, excluding the strictly defined monopoly sections, as the middle bourgeoisie. We observe in our country the phenomenon of the feudal and landlord elements entering into the field of industry and commerce by starting medium and small-scale enterprises such as small rice-mills, oil-mills, foundries and workshops and such other concerns. These industries or business concerns are only of an auxiliary nature for their main incomes which they derive chiefly from landlordism, usury and such other feudal and semifeudal exploitation. These groups, the greater part of whose income is from land and only a small part from their small and medium industrial and commercial concerns, are to be characterised as mainly the landlord bourgeoisie, but not the middle bourgeoisie, whom we speak of as our ally. Although these sections too express some sort of concern and anxiety at the disintegration of their smallscale enterprises under the impact of the crisis, they are decidedly hostile to the agrarian revolution as it would adversely affect the major portion of their ill-gotten incomes and hence can never play a revolutionary role and therefore cannot be treated as allies in the democratic revolution.

Similarly there are sections of the bourgeoisie in different provinces who do not come under the strict definition of monopolists and who have industrial and business concerns as their main source of income, but who are today in the governmental power as satellites of the present ruling bloc, are in different provinces in close cooperation with the landlord bourgeoisie mentioned above. These two sections are hostile to the revolution.

But in those national territories where the agrarian revolution has not assumed serious proportions as to immediately threaten them and where the proletariat has not yet seriously posed for its hegemony over the movement for selfdetermination of nationalities, it may be still discernible that these sections also voice some opposition to the present ruling bloc—particularly on the issue of formation of 'linguistic provinces. This opposition is not a revolutionary opposition but only a reformist, compromising and extremely vacillating one, for they demand only linguistic provinces and not full selfdetermination, with the right to

secede. The fact that they have acquiesced in the state-merger schemes of Sardar Patel, denying the liquidation of princely states and the right of those people to join their respective national homelands and the fact that they are opposed to all active worker and peasant democratic movements on their territories, the growth and strength and success of which alone would win the real national unification and selfdetermination of those peoples, would only go to prove their basically reactionary character. Hence no question of a strategical alliance with these sections does arise.

The proletariat and the Communist Party have to head this current of struggle for selfdetermination of nationalities, exposing and isolating the treacherous reformist bourgeois leadership and dislodging it from the honourable position of leadership over these movements, and thus tear away the petty-bourgeoisie and middle bourgeoisie from the fold of the reactionary and reformist bourgeoisie, and assert the hegemony of the working class over these movements. At the same time, the proletariat will also utilise, in furtherance of the democratic revolution, all the fissures and conflicts that arise on this issue between these sections and all-India big bourgeoisie, without entertaining in the least any illusions of a united front with them in the struggle for genuine national independence and people's democracy.

Such is the alliance of class forces in India today and such are the democratic classes and groups, as described above, that stand ranged against the antinational alliance of the imperialists, native big business and feudal landlord classes; such is the key task of the people's democratic front to overthrow this reactionary ruling class and establish a people's democracy.

The basic programme on which all these anti-imperialist classes can be mobilised in the people's democratic front is as follows:

- (1) Complete national independence, severance from the British commonwealth and the Anglo-American reactionary war-bloc, and the establishment of close economic, political and cultural ties with genuinely democratic countries and above all with the Soviet Union and Chinese People's Republic.

- (2) Scrapping the slave constitution and repealing all repressive laws enforced on the people by the present reactionary

ruling bloc, and the framing a people's democratic constitution by a constituent assembly elected on the basis of adult franchise for men and women above 18 years of age, guaranteeing full freedom, democracy and civil liberties to the people irrespective of sex, community and nationality.

(3) Establishment of a Union of People's Democratic Republics, its government representing all the anti-imperialist classes, i.e. workers, peasants, petty bourgeoisie and middle bourgeoisie.

(4) Abolition of the princely states, formation of the united homelands of different nations and nationalities, national unification on the principle of the right of selfdetermination of nations and nationalities living in the subcontinent of India.

(5) Abolition of landlordism without compensation and distribution of land to the tillers of the soil.

(6) Confiscation of all foreign capital and nationalisation of all key and largescale industries.

(7) 7-hour day, living wage, guarantee of employment, old age pensions etc. for the working class.

(8) Protection of the rights of national, religious and other minorities and tribal peoples.

(9) Organisation of a people's liberation army to win the revolution and to defend the people's democratic order and the establishment of the right of the people to bear arms.

This programme cannot be implemented as long as the present ruling bloc remains in power. It can be defeated and vanquished by forging a fighting people's democratic front of all the anti-imperialist revolutionary forces; secondly, the people's democratic front has to be the front of armed struggle without which the counterrevolution that is armed to the teeth can never be defeated; and thirdly, the armed struggle, and the people's democratic front to conduct it, can succeed in attaining its objective only under the firm guidance of the proletariat and the Communist Party.

Failure to realise any of the above basic truths and tasks is to nourish false illusions fraught with serious dangers both for the realisation of the day-to-day demands of the people and the fulfilment of the programme of the democratic front.

Before dealing with each of the three basic concepts of the political line in detail we must have a clear grasp of the inter-

relation between these three.

*The Interrelation between the United Front,  
Armed Struggle and the Party*

The question of united front (strategy), armed struggle (main tactic of struggle) and the party (proletarian hegemony) are the three fundamental questions of the people's democratic revolution in India. A correct understanding of each one of them and their interrelation, and a correct solution for each one of them alone, in the final analysis, decide the success or otherwise of the revolution.

These three problems form a component part of the political line of the party. If we approach any of these problems in isolation, it would get us nowhere near the success of our political line. Each of them in a way is dependent upon the other and hence interdependent. The stronger the party is, the more effectively the armed struggle is carried on, the quicker the united front can be built; the wider and deeper the armed struggle grows, the stronger the united front becomes, the riper would be the conditions congenial for building up of a mass party; the greater the united front is consolidated, the bigger the scope for a mass party becomes, the more intensively and extensively grows the armed struggle leading to the final phase of the war of liberation.

This truth is not only borne out by the history of the world revolutionary proletarian movement but also can be drawn from our own past history. The Communist Party of India, when it started as a small group, adopted propaganda and agitation as the main forms of struggle and widened its influence among workers in particular and people in general. In the next stage, it had to adopt the economic and political strikes, meetings and demonstrations as the main form of struggle which not only enabled the party to grow in strength but also brought into existence an embryonic united front of workers, peasants and other democratic classes, groups and individuals. This independent strength and mobilisation of the revolutionary forces under the leadership of the party had seriously challenged imperialism and its lackeys who stooped to armed retaliation, failing in their usual normal forms of repression. The party and the revo-



lutionary forces that were already mobilised under it would be able to advance in such a situation by adopting a suitable form of struggle, i.e. armed resistance as the principal form. It is thus the growth of the party and the growth of the united front are intimately connected with the proper forms of struggle the party adopts and diligently decides which form under which circumstances becomes the principal form. One of the reasons for our failure in the postwar period to successfully advance the revolutionary movement for national liberation is due to missing this main form of struggle, though the bungling in class strategy by right-opportunism and left-sectarianism is also equally responsible. It is not our failure to lead the economic-political strikes and demonstrations and peasant struggles etc. but the failure to realise that the advanced stage of the revolution and in its turn the counterrevolution demand a far higher form of struggle to successfully defend the revolutionary movement, that is at the root of our mistake in choosing forms of struggle.

Thus it is clear that to the extent the party could understand and approach each of these problems, namely, the united front, the principal and subsidiary forms of struggle and party-building on the one hand and their interrelation on the other, to that extent only the revolution in general and the united front, principal and subsidiary forms of struggle, and party-building, in particular, have advanced or otherwise. The lack of proper understanding and correct approach to each of the abovediscussed issues and their interrelation has hindered the consolidation, growth and bolshevisation of the party, has disrupted the people's unity already built under its leadership, not to speak of a wider united front and has also narrowed the scope and sweep of the armed guerilla war, with the net result of paralysing the growth of national-liberation struggle.

It is a utopian idea to think that a nationwide united front is the first requisite for starting armed guerilla struggle or that a countrywide, strong, mass communist party is a precondition for the armed struggle. To say so is to miss the essence of the whole political line with a mechanical and compartmental approach. Either the proletariat and the party with its present strength must learn to combine these three component parts of the political line, judiciously apply to the concrete conditions

and advance or make a mechanical approach to each of these problems in separation and attempt to push through one of the three in isolation to the other, which is fraught with the danger of liquidating the revolution.

#### VI. PROLETARIAN HEGEMONY AND THE ROLE OF THE PARTY

In the foregoing section the interrelation of the three component parts of our political line has been briefly stated. Now let us take up one by one each of these questions and discuss in brief the correct concept and the task in relation to each of these three. For the convenience of discussion, we take up the question of the party first, of armed struggle next and the people's democratic front last.

It is already pointed out in the foregoing pages how the question of proletarian hegemony is an indivisible part of the struggle for national independence and democracy. The struggle of the Indian working class for its hegemony over the national-liberation movement has been a very stubborn struggle of nearly two decades which, until the open and final desertion of the national big bourgeoisie and liberal landlord classes as represented by the Congress leadership to the camp of imperialism, has not met with complete success. The CC is aware that this was due primarily to the following reasons: *firstly*, the working class had to face "such an exceedingly powerful opponent in the person of British imperialism, who, with all the means at its disposal, crushed and disrupted the national-liberation movement" by employing ruthless and bloody terror and all kinds of repressive measures on the one hand, and on the other, by utilising the national reformism preached and practised by the Congress leadership; *secondly*, the working class had to confront the bourgeois Congress leadership which had entrenched itself in the leadership of national-liberation movement decades earlier before the organised Indian proletariat and the Communist Party had seen the light of the day, preaching worst national reformism, exploiting and fanning rabid religious fanaticism, communalism and all sorts of Gandhian revivalist ideas; and *thirdly*, the ideological and theoretical immaturity of the Com-

munist Party, which expressed itself in practising the right-opportunist and nationalistic mistakes, in some measure or other, throughout the period of 1935-48, failed to isolate and dislodge the national-reformist leadership of the big bourgeoisie from the hegemony of the national-liberation movement.

All the same considerable strengthening of the working class and the Communist Party during this time—particularly in the period of antifascist war because of the party's basically correct attitude to war and its effective participation in leading all the active, militant mass struggles in the postwar period in the face of increasing discouragement, opposition and desertion by the Congress leadership had helped the struggle for proletarian hegemony to crystallise in a stronger and increasing way. The final betrayal of the anti-imperialist people's movement by the big bourgeoisie had objectively placed the Indian working class at the hegemony of the national-liberation movement.

Proletarian hegemony in the national-liberation movement is expressed principally in the ideological, political and organisational leadership over its allied classes.

Proletarian hegemony can be established, consolidated and advanced by the proletariat taking initiative to participate, organise and lead all the struggles of the allied classes, primarily the peasantry, beginning with the partial struggles for their demands, culminating in the final struggle for state power.

The organisation, consolidation and the strengthening of the Communist Party is an essential condition, and an indispensable factor for the way for the hegemony of the proletariat to be prepared and finally achieved.

It follows that for organising a strong people's democratic front under proletarian hegemony for a successful conclusion of the democratic revolution, the building up of a strong and well-organised communist party becomes the prime task of the proletariat, drawing into the party's ranks all the advanced elements of the progressive revolutionary-democratic forces in the country; without such a party to organise and lead a united front of armed struggle, the final victory in the war of liberation is unthinkable.

To build a mass party capable of leading the united front of

armed struggle to complete victory in the revolution, it is absolutely necessary to examine broadly how the successive periods of reformism and sectarianism had affected the party so that we may assess the present organisational situation of the party and chalk out the future tasks.

The right-reformist deviation had dominated the party for a pretty long time of more than 10 years till the 'second party congress. It had its own social-democratic organisational methods. The right-reformist politics as well as its organisational principles and methods that were slowly and steadily introduced in small doses had culminated by the time of the second party congress in the following:

(a) In the greater part of the party organisation, the cell system was abolished and in its place the general-body functioning introduced. The general body was a congregation of party members, militants and sympathisers, where serious discussion, criticism and selfcriticism of individual members of the unit, work distribution and checkup etc. were out of place. Likewise the mass front fractions were also dissolved.

(b) A minimum compulsory party work for every party member was not insisted upon; consequently, the contribution of part-time work by comrades employed in different professions had vanished. The number of paid wholtimers was increased in such a way that they have reached in some districts to 100-150 and in several provinces to several hundreds. Thus a top-heavy machinery with which a revolutionary party can never function had been created. More than anything else, the work and life of the party was made to be based upon not on the bulk of the membership but on this chunk of paid wholtimers.

(c) Consistent with the above bourgeois methods of organisation, the bourgeois financial methods were adopted. Neither the membership fee nor the party levies were regularly collected. Instead of basing the party finances on such party income and other mass collections, it was based on the lump-sum contributions of individual sympathisers and members coming from bourgeois and landlord families. A workingclass party with a system of bourgeois finances had become the feature.

(d) The ideological and theoretical education was systematically discouraged. Hardly a few hundreds all over the country

were given short-time schooling and the symbolic schools that were held were made the virtual platforms to preach and instil the social-democratic ideas on political-organisational matters. Any attempt to study the classics was labelled as abstract Marxism and all such comrades were treated with contempt, calling them 'bookish', 'unpractical' theorists.

(e) Criticism and selfcriticism—the chief weapons without which a Marxist party gets rusted and destroyed—was either totally given up or made a formal mockery. Not once the central committee submitted any selfcritical report in the period between 1940 to 1948 during which time the central committee had very seriously erred, for example, as in the case of six months of refusal to orientate towards the change in the character of the war after the Soviet Union was attacked, when the central committee did not provide the ranks with any educative selfcritical document. During the antifascist war, neither periodical selfcritical examination of its policies and practices was ever taken up nor the entire work of the period assessed soon after the war. In the postwar period, the central committee had come out with nearly half a dozen political resolutions, starting with the 1945 September draft that visualised a peaceful transition to freedom and ending with the June resolution on Mountbatten award in 1947. On none of these cases of volte face—a selfcritical report was ever sent to party ranks or even to provincial committees and district committees. The innerparty struggle for a correct line was dreaded and the party ranks were never taken into confidence. The central committee members who were expressing their differences on political line from time to time resiled after a show of opposition and entered into opportunist compromises. Thus a false sense of political unity of the central committee was demonstrated to deceive and silence the ranks. An uncompromising, irreconcilable struggle on principles—theoretical, political and organisational—had become alien to the central leadership.

(f) Rank-and-file initiative was killed. Spoon-feeding methods were taught and a disastrous theory of separation of political and practical leadership was invented and the central committee was supposed to be the exclusive political leader and the rest were asked to follow and do the practical jobs. Thus a

bourgeois pattern of infallible of leaders and blind followers, the bourgeois style of work, style of journalism, reading and writing etc. were developed.

(g) The slogan of building a mass party was extended to the ridiculous end and the standard for a party member was reduced to the standard of a sympathiser and a militant. If the general membership that had grown in the people's war period itself was from the peaceful struggles characteristic of that period who could not be steeled and tempered in big revolutionary class struggles, the bringing down of the level of party membership to that of the masses had added to reduce the party organisation almost to the state of a mass organisation.

The elements coming from the proletariat and other toiling classes were neither developed nor promoted to leading positions at any level in a serious way and untempered petty-bourgeois intellectuals—most of them coming straight from colleges and universities—were placed in key and responsible positions in the party organisation.

(h) The colonial conditions were ignored and a cheap imitation of the parties of bourgeois-democratic countries was made. During the period of legality in the antifascist war, with illusions of peaceful transition, with no recognition of cruel imperialist rule, full 'legalist' methods were introduced. The party leadership never for a moment thought of illegality to be imposed on the party. It can be seen from the fact that all the party members and contacts in the military, navy and air force and government offices were openly exposed to the last man. Not a sympathiser nor a donor is kept away from the eye of the imperialist government. This miserable lack of foresight opened all the flanks to the class enemy. When a situation would arise for the party to work almost illegally, the enemy could easily strike at its vitals and make the existence and conspiratorial illegal work of the party a hundred times more difficult.

Thus the grave errors of a social-democratic nature in that period left the party, at a crucial turn, extremely vulnerable, debilitated and devitalised with the capacity only to function the reformist, peaceful, open and legal struggles but not the serious revolutionary tasks in illegal conditions.

*Second Party Congress and After*

By the time the second party congress was held, the party organisation, with the standard of party membership reduced to mass level, completely corroding its revolutionary position and fighting capacity, was with a total membership of 90,000. The new leadership which came to the helm of the party leadership had fared no better with the party organisation. The most surprising thing to be noted here is, that at the second party congress which was held five years after the first congress in 1943, there was neither a party organisational report submitted to the party congress nor was the serious innerparty position at all understood then. The fight against reformism was so shallow and single-tracked as to satisfy with the political side of it and on the organisational side removal of Joshi from the central committee was thought to be a complete remedy.

With the change of political line of the December resolution and a complete break with the collaborationist bourgeoisie and an irreconcilable fight against it was decided, the bourgeois government began to hatch its plans of offensive against the party. A good part of the southern delegation, representing more than 50,000 party members, had to attend the second party congress with warrants on their heads. Hardly a month after the congress the party in Bengal was banned. The polit bureau had not cared to issue a single circular or party letter, sending directions and instructions on the necessity of illegal functioning and strictly illegal party building. The moment we corrected our former grossly reformist line and put the party on the lines of struggle, a good section of the alien class elements who came into the party in the reformist period began to slowly quit the party. Faced with the intensification of partial struggles of workers, agricultural labour and tenants on one hand and the ferocious attacks by the police and the military on the other, almost half of the party membership that was recorded at the second party congress had left the party. The sectarian polit bureau did not draw any lessons even then. On the other hand, it was issuing slogans of revolutionary assertion of legality, while already the party was under virtual ban in the territories where there was three-fourths of the total membership.

The party organisation which headed the most militant mass

struggles during this period when faced with the increasingly ruthless 'retaliatory' attacks of the government—had lost, by the end of 1948, nearly half of the membership recorded at the second congress.

The polit bureau had by then worked out a full sectarian line in its new documents on 'Strategy and Tactics', 'Agrarian Question' and 'People's Democracy' and pushed through the new adventurist line with authoritarian and titoite methods of organisational discipline throughout the year 1949. It neither cared to take note of the growing white terror in the country, nor took steps to guard the party organisation against the annihilating attacks of the ruling class.

(a) The sectarian party leadership began to enforce its disruptive disciplinary actions, such as removal and reorganisation of provincial committees and district committees, suspensions and expulsions.

(b) The weapon of selfcriticism was abused and 'confessions' were extorted at the point of the discipline-bayonet.

(c) Innerparty democracy was completely negated and an authoritarian regime of terror was introduced.

(d) The old reformist methods of party finances, top-heavy organisation with hundreds of paid wholetimers, of running the press and journals, style of work were all continued and were sought to be kept intact. As the cruel logic would have it, the party organisation that was built with the reformist policies and practice dominating it had again become the vehicle to run a thoroughly sectarian line and when faced with the brutal onslaught of the collaborationist government, it suffered devastating blows, resulting in very serious damage.

### *Present Position of the Party*

Coming to the present position of the party it has to be characterised as extremely serious. It faces an all-round crisis—political, organisational and financial. All the evil effects of years of both right-reformist and left-sectarian politics and methods of organisation, all the unbolshevik practices and style of work have now burst forth like a volcano creating an all-round inner-party crisis.



Politically, great confusion prevails inside the party while the new line is under discussion. This confusion has almost paralysed the party into inaction. Of course exceptions are there with regard to certain party units in certain territories but these do not alter the general picture. The party members, disappointed by the successive right-reformist and left-sectarian mistakes of the leadership, have come to a stage where they are not able to put faith in any leadership at any level—from the central committee down to the lowest unit, nor able to act with conviction and determination.

Organisationally, as a reaction to the long suppression of innerparty democracy and bureaucratic and authoritarian mode of functioning in the past, a tendency to anarchy has been raising its head inside the party throwing to winds all party forms. In the name of innerparty democracy and fighting bureaucracy, antiparty, opportunist and disruptive trends have been raising their head which if unchecked will breed factional tendencies that will seriously threaten the unity of the party.

The organisational position is equally bad. In the absence of factual organisational reports from most of the provinces no correct numerical strength of the party can be ascertained. But on a rough calculation, the formal party membership stands at twenty to twenty-five thousand. How far all this membership is functioning in regular party units or cut off from regular connection due to savage repression and lack of proper tech-connections can only be ascertained if all the committees, from province down to the cells, send factual up-to-date reports. But it is not an exaggeration to state that majority of the party members are not yet reorganised in properly functioning cells or other party units. Generally speaking, no proper illegal tech apparatus exists which can withstand the cruel onslaught of the enemy which is mounting its offensive against the party in most parts of the country.

Taking advantage of the political confusion, loose organisational functioning, weak party tech and above all the antiproletarian tendencies that are already at work inside the party, the class enemy is trying to reap its full harvest and making frantic attempts to wipe the party out of existence not only by intensifying its attack from outside but from inside also. In the back-

ground of the desperate attempts of unleashing a new world war by the Anglo-American war bloc with which the ruling clique of our country has lined up, and considering the vital position that India holds in the imperialist war plan, such attempts against the party on the part of the imperialists and their henchmen cannot but take more and more menacing proportions.

The financial position of the party from top to bottom is also precarious. A top-heavy party machinery at every level has been built up basing on the vicious principle of overcentralisation and a wholetimer for every job, out of all proportion to the strength, resources and needs of the moment, involving thousands of wholetimers and lakhs of rupees. The innerparty crisis has aggravated this aspect of the situation beyond measure.

It is true that the political initiative of the party members and party units at all levels has been released after the appearance of the information bureau organ editorial of 27 January last, showing greater participation of the ranks in evolving the new party line and smashing the old bureaucracy that suppressed innerparty democracy and strangled free political discussions inside the party. But in its place real innerparty democracy, i.e. ranks and lower party units *effectively* participating in moulding the innerparty life on correct party principles, has not yet been established. The low ideological level of the party as a whole due to the lack of proper education in the fundamentals of Marxism-Leninism and their application to the practical problem facing the party, stands as a big hindrance in the way of effective participation of the ranks in shaping the innerparty life and taking *proper* share in moulding the decisions and policies of the party.

But in spite of all these, the party has at its disposal the forces capable of successfully heading the revolution if a correct political line and tactical methods are adopted and proper organisational principles are applied. It is not only the formally organised party members, but innumerable party militants are also there coming from all sections and classes of our people, who have been thrown up and steeled in course of thousands of heroic and glorious battles waged under the party flag. With proper and correct approach they can be organised into a mighty force inside the party. The loyalty of the party ranks and those innumerable militants to the cause of Marxism-Leninism and

international communist movement is so great as it was never before. The onward march of the world communist movement headed by the great CPSU(B) and particularly the heroic battles and great successes of the brother communist parties in Asia have drawn millions of our countrymen into the ranks of supporters and sympathisers of the party and an inexhaustible source of strength in building a mass party. The developments in the international situation and also the internal situation of our country offer great opportunities for unifying and regrouping our forces.

The hopes of the class enemy and its cruel designs of annihilating and destroying the party have so far failed. The party can heal its wounds, reorganise its forces, unify its ranks and march ahead to build a revolutionary mass party if it is not unnerved before the enemy's offensive, if it does not lose heart at the organisational dislocations, but works with full confidence in the fighting revolutionary forces of our country in the present-day world background and scrupulously maintains its unity.

To build a mass party capable of playing its historical role in building the people's democratic front and standing at the head of the armed guerilla struggle for achieving the final victory in the war of national liberation for freedom, independence and democracy, the following tasks have to be fulfilled:

1. *Guard the unity of the party as the apple of the eye.* The party can really be unified and its unity can be maintained on the basis of a correct political line—the discussion for which is now going on inside the party. But for conducting this discussion in a fruitful manner so that the correct line can be quickly evolved, every party member must rise to the occasion and pledge to fight for maintaining the unity of the party and its safe existence while the discussion is going on and conduct the entire discussion in a proper party way. For this purpose the following principles have to be accepted:

- (a) Acceptance of the editorial of the *Lasting Peace* dated 27 January, the Peking manifesto and the documents of the Soviet and Chinese comrades as the basis of our new political line.

- (b) The tendencies that are raising their head to disregard all party forms have to be immediately checked. Minimum party discipline has to be maintained so that a proper atmosphere may

exist for carrying on the innerparty discussion in a free and frank manner.

(c) All political trends which accept the abovementioned international documents as the basis for the political line and those who respect party forms will have to be represented in the party committees at all levels.

(d) All party committees from bottom to top have to be reconstituted through election, on the basis of discussion on the new line, and criticism and selfcriticism of the activities of the respective party unit and individuals concerned. Only in an exceptional case, any party unit may be exempted from election.

(e) Innerparty discussions have to be carried on properly on the basis of the international documents, the central committee documents and the documents submitted by other comrades or committees for discussion, under the guidance of the central committee with a view to hammering out the new political line at the party congress.

(f) All charges having connections with enemies and *serious* lapses of party discipline have to be properly inquired into.

(g) All cases of disciplinary action on committees and individuals taken in the left-sectarian period have to be reviewed and proper justice has to be done.

(h) The party of the proletariat cannot continue to function without a central political line. The party cannot sit quiet while world forces are rapidly on the move, masses in our country are going into struggles, other parties are moving in their own way misleading the people in a reformist or reactionary channel and the enemy is seriously trying to isolate the party from the masses and has been hurling mortal blows to destroy it. So long the new political line is not finally endorsed by the party congress the line given by the central committee should be considered as the central party line. But as serious disagreements exist inside the party over the line no disciplinary action should be taken against any comrade or party unit for nonimplementation of the existing CC line. The party work, in such circumstances, can be carried on on the basis of whatever common understanding is there with the CC line.

While the new line is under discussion no party member or party unit should rush to the press or go before the public and

thus take the innerparty differences outside the party form.

2. *Forward to build a strictly illegal mass party.* While the Anglo-American imperialists with their monstrous designs are out to destroy the very existence of communist parties, when the stooge Congress government has undertaken the role of the principal hangman in Asia bent upon violent liquidation of the party, it would be treacherous to the working class and the freedom struggle for any communist to entertain legalist illusions. The banner of legality is the voice of the liquidator inside the party.

Building up of a strictly illegal party is a precondition to unifying the party by chalking out a correct political line; such a party organisation alone can undeviatingly hold on and further develop the present bases of armed resistance such as Telangana, Andhra, hill-border regions of Mymensingh, Tripura and Manipur and boldly initiate the agrarian struggle and armed guerilla warfare wherever possible; such an illegal party alone can boldly popularise the slogan of armed struggle amongst the people as to make it their common consciousness that it is the only way to defeat the imperialists and native reaction.

Leaving details of steps for further clarification, the following steps are immediately to be taken:

(a) A census has to be taken of all the existing party membership and all those who are ready to work for the party and abide by its discipline should be organised into illegal cells. All normal duties of the party members including the paying of party membership dues to be *strictly* enforced.

(b) The new recruits, even in provinces where formal and nominal legality exists for the party, should not be exposed as communists and party members.

(c) The present top-heavy machinery that is threatening to crash any day from the CC down to a DC has to be reorganised. The illegal organisation demands greater decentralisation and the extreme centralisation that is still being persisted in our organisation is a constant threat to the illegal party.

(d) Party's finances are to be based on the people and pooled in a people's way and have to be stopped from depending on a few big donors.

The present number of paid wholetimers, whose burden on the party cannot be maintained any longer, will have to be re-

duced to a minimum number absolutely required; the rest are to be sent to different areas to continue the part-time revolutionary work while maintaining themselves in some profession or other. This course is inevitable and has to continue until such a time the party is put on sound revolutionary rails of finance and the people's movement under our lead would be able to bear the burden of these finances.

3. *Keep constant vigilance on the activities of the enemy agents and spies.* The vigilance against spies and police informers has to be redoubled; the menacing leakage of every circular to the government on the morrow of its issue is an alarming signal for every party member. Different international agencies for spying and wrecking activities are running riot in our country under the patronage of the government. Their methods are manifold; they employ their agents to drag the party into an endless discussion as to cripple its active functioning, to spread gossip of factional quarrels in the party, to propagate false and concocted stories on individuals to undermine the authority of the leadership at different levels; they utilise the kept bourgeois press and pretend to take sides on innerparty controversies and attempt to mobilise all favourable trends that are likely to help reaction and all this in the name of correct Marxism and its correct application to India.

4. *Make bolshevik style of work based on initiative, the basis of practical activity.* The bourgeois style of work based on bureaucracy, overcentralising and curbing the initiative of party members and lower party units, practised in both the reformist as well as sectarian days, has to be totally changed. New bolshevik style of work based on the initiative of the party members and the lower committees has to be developed patiently. Thus it is by making the party members and lower committees to act with initiative and tackle the problems they face in the practical activity without waiting for the guidance and directives of the higher committee as in the past, that we can develop mass activity and build a mass revolutionary movement in these days of illegality.

5. *Make criticism and selfcriticism a constant feature in our party activity.* Bolshevik criticism and selfcriticism, the weapon of cleaning the party of all the rust and improving the understanding and mode of work of each committee and individual in

particular and the party as a whole in general has been misused both in the days of reformism and sectarianism. Specially in the latter days of sectarianism, it went to the extent of extracting catholic confessions. We have to restore the bolshevik methods of criticism and selfcriticism to their proper place and make constructive criticism and genuine selfcriticism as the regular practice inside the party, to sharpen one's own understanding and get rid of antiproletarian ideas and practices as well as clean the dirt from the party as a whole. Without restoring bolshevik criticism and selfcriticism in the party, it cannot be built up as a mass party capable of fulfilling the great tasks history has placed on it today.

6. *Make the education in the fundamentals of Marxism-Leninism and their application to our day-to-day practice a regular feature of our party life.* Education in the principles of Marxism-Leninism and their application to the day-to-day practice has never been encouraged in the past. In order to be able to make the party members and all party units effectively participate in moulding the party life and contribute their share in shaping its policy, to make them act with initiative and tackle the problems facing them in their daily activity and fight the alien-class ideas and practices, we have to make the education in the fundamental principles of Marxism-Leninism and their application in the daily activity a normal regular feature of our entire party from top to bottom. For this party schools have to be organised as *permanent institutions* inside our party.

The entire party from top to bottom must undergo such schooling in one way or another. Immediate schools for cadres have to be organised for training them up for different jobs as party unit leaders, tech organisers, mass front organisers, guerilla leaders, etc. Arrangements have to be made to educate the illiterate party members in reading and writing and to impart education in the fundamentals of Marxism-Leninism to them.

Without raising the ideological and political level of the entire party, the party cannot fulfil tasks that have devolved on it.

## VII. ARMED STRUGGLE AS THE PRINCIPAL FORM OF STRUGGLE

First of all it must be made clear that the form of armed

struggle that we speak of today in relation to our liberation struggle is entirely different from the classical form of political general strike and countrywide armed uprising; though the slogan of armed struggle we now advocate also comes under the broad concept of armed uprising, it has its own special laws as distinct from the countrywide armed uprising. It is erroneous to confuse these two forms of struggle. If each is not understood in its proper context, we are sure to fail to grasp the essence of the present slogan of armed struggle, which has to be an essential component part of our political line.

These two forms of struggle, of countrywide armed uprising and the armed struggle we now speak of, arise in the background of two totally dissimilar objective and subjective conditions of a revolution and these two special forms of political struggle have two special rules that have to be studied diligently and mastered well.

The objective and subjective conditions, i.e. prerequisites for issuing the slogan of countrywide armed uprising or classical insurrection, are according to the teachings of Lenin and Stalin broadly as follows:

The call for such an uprising can be given when the "whole country is convulsed with crisis, mass indignation and revolution", when a "bold, unanimous, organised, simultaneous, aggressive, audacious and determined onslaught" against the class enemy is possible and inevitable; and when the majority of the working class is won over to the side of revolution, when the majority of the people are either won over for direct political action or at least for benevolent neutrality and above all when a party capable of leading the insurrection has come into existence.

As pointedly put forth by Lenin, they are:

"(1) all the class forces hostile to us have become sufficiently entangled, are sufficiently at loggerheads with each other, have sufficiently weakened themselves in a struggle which is beyond their strength;

"(2) all the vacillating, wavering, unstable, intermediate elements—the petty bourgeoisie and the petty-bourgeois democrats—as distinct from the bourgeoisie—have sufficiently exposed themselves in the eyes of the people, have sufficiently disgraced themselves through their practical bankruptcy;



"(3) among the proletariat, a mass sentiment in favour of supporting the most determined, supremely bold, revolutionary action against the bourgeoisie has arisen and begun vigorously to grow.

"Then revolution is indeed ripe; then, indeed, if we have correctly gauged all the conditions indicated and briefly outlined above, and if we have chosen the moment rightly, our victory is assured" (*Leftwing Communism*).

Now, coming to the special rules of this form of struggle, Lenin summarises in the following way:

"But armed insurrection is a *special* form of political struggle, subject to special rules which must be attentively studied. Karl Marx expressed this thought with remarkable salience when he said that armed '*insurrection is an art quite as much as war*'.

"The principal rules of this art, as laid down by Marx, are as follows:

"(1) *Never play with insurrection; but, when once it is begun, know firmly that it must be carried through to the end.*

"(2) Concentrate, at the decisive place and time, *forces greatly superior to those of the enemy; otherwise the latter, better prepared and better organised, will defeat and ruin the insurgents.*

"(3) Once the insurrection has begun, it is necessary to act with greatest *determination*, and, at all costs, on the *offensive* . . .

"(4) Make sure of taking the enemy by surprise, and seize the moment when his troops are scattered.

"(5) Endeavour to win success *each day*, even small ones (one might say 'each hour' in the case of one town), and at all costs maintain '*moral ascendancy*'.

"Marx summarised the lessons of all revolutions concerning armed insurrection in the words of 'Danton, the greatest master of revolutionary policy yet known; audacity, audacity and once again audacity!' " ("Advice of an Onlooker").

The above passages make it abundantly clear the preconditions and special rules that are necessary for the special form of struggle of 'insurrection'.

The armed struggle we advocate now is distinct from the above. It is a peasant war under the leadership of the proletariat.

"The total concept of this kind of struggle", as Mao puts it, is

"guerilla warfare". "It is the inevitable and hence the best form of struggle in a backward, vast, semicolonial country and over a long period of time by the people's armed forces to overcome the armed enemy and to create their own bases."

This form of struggle is resorted to when the class enemy, afraid of the deepening economic crisis and the growing mass upsurge that might develop into a political general strike and countrywide armed uprising has unleashed an armed offensive to foil and smash such a development; when the organised revolutionary forces are comparatively weaker and the forces and weapons of the class enemy stronger; when the class enemy of the revolution bars all the doors for normal, peaceful people's day-to-day forms of struggle to defend, nourish and advance the revolutionary forces and when the necessity arises and possibility exists for the revolutionary forces to defend themselves and grow through adoption of other effective form or forms of struggle.

The special rules for this form of struggle are briefly as follows:

"The tactics of guerilla warfare should be waged on the principles of initiative, agility, planning and attack, adapting to the conditions of the enemy, topography, communications, weather and the strength of the guerillas and the inhabitants at a given time and place, to operate according to the directives of striking at the west by pretending to attack the east, of avoiding the strong and attacking the weak point, of assuring freedom of advance and retreat, of waging brief battles of quick decisions, and in the case of an enemy force stronger than ours, to operate according to the directives of 'we retreat when the enemy advances; disturb him when he rests, strike at him when he is tired and pursue him when he retreats'. Under these directives, we wage battles to raid, disrupt, ambush and sabotage the enemy from his rear, flank and unguarded or weak spots, thereby to expose, confuse, contain and split the enemy, to delay and wear him out to beat and destroy him" (*Aspects of China's Anti-Jap Struggle* by Mao Tse-tung).

Now it is clear that these two different forms of struggle—the insurrectionary uprising and armed guerilla warfare arise in two different conditions of the revolution, have two different special rules and two different starting points, traversing two different

paths though ultimately both aim at the defeat of the enemy and victory of the revolution.

If the first begins as a *final counteroffensive*, on the initiative of the revolutionary forces against the *tottering class enemy*, the second is started, in the first place, as a measure of sheer *self-defence* against the attacks of the *stronger enemy*, though pure and simple defence does not lead the revolution to victory without steadily acquiring the means and strength to counterattack and destroy the enemy. If the former sets as its first target to storm the strongholds and the key centres, the latter first chooses the weakest centres of the enemy. If one is a battle waged with thoroughness *for a quick decision*, the other is a *prolonged warfare to wear out and conquer* the enemy; while the main theatre of struggle for the former is cities *with the proletariat as the main driving force*, the main theatre of struggle for the latter is the rural side with the *peasantry as the main driving force*—though both can achieve victory only under the firm political, ideological and organisational leadership of the proletariat and the communist party. When a strong national united front, well-organised class and mass organisations and a sufficiently strong nationwide communist party, etc., are the essential preconditions for starting the insurrectionary form of struggle and its successful conclusion, in the case of the latter all these conditions can be materialised only on the eve of final victory in the long process of armed guerilla warfare and its prerequisites are of entirely different nature and *their character will be changing from phase to phase, stage to stage and territory to territory* and so on and so forth. If for the timing and the execution of insurrection, *countrywide* and highly *centralised directives* are absolutely necessary, the timing, planning and execution for the armed guerilla warfare depends, to a great extent, for a long time, until a certain stage, upon the *local, zonal and regional leadership and their concrete study and initiative*, though of course subject to the strictly defined and chalked out political line of the party. Thus there are a number of differences between these two forms of struggle which should never be mixed up and confused one with the other, but a clear grasp of these differences is absolutely essential for a proper understanding and effective implementation of the form of struggle we advocate now.

Secondly, we have to take stock of the special characteristics of our country that place before us this path and perspective of guerilla warfare as an effective path and form of struggle in our war of national liberation.

The characteristic of our country is basically colonial with feudal and semifeudal forms of economy dominating, with no genuine national independence and democratic system in existence, with a numerically small proletariat and city population, with vast spaces of the rural side embracing 87 per cent of the population, with agrarian revolution as its immediate task, with imperialists and their lackeys resorting to ruthless armed repression on the masses, not tolerating the growth, nursing and for that matter even the very existence of the revolutionary forces. Hence it is utopian to think of legal existence of the revolutionary forces with their peaceful normal forms of struggle or the path of armed insurrection, capturing the cities first and then liberating the countryside; but our path is just the opposite, i.e. capturing the countryside first, leading to liberating of cities next.

The failure to understand these specific characteristics and the consequent special laws operating in our country and a cheap attempt to copy verbatim the fighting strategy of the developed capitalist countries by both the right-reformist and left-sectarian lines pursued in the past by the party leadership have resulted in paralysing the progress of revolution and has allowed the imperialist enemy to advance with his armed reaction. And this failure, apart from the right-opportunist and left-sectarian strategical mistakes pursued so far by the party, is one of the basic causes for losing the initiative in the revolution to the enemy, particularly in the postwar period.

Thirdly, this type of armed struggle will necessarily have a number of phases and stages according to the specific conditions obtaining in each case. In our case it might be safely said that it has to traverse through the stages of guerilla resistance with whatever available arms that the people can lay their hands on, through the formation of extensive guerilla areas, the establishment of liberation bases and formation of liberation armies whenever conditions permit, advancing to the stage of final offensive for complete victory with regular warfare.

Accordingly the form of this armed warfare also will change,

i.e. from the armed guerilla resistance by small squads to the positional warfare passing through different stages and forms of warfare. Each of these different forms of armed struggle again in its turn assumes according to the phase and stage, as the principal form and the others become in their turn auxiliary to it. For example, in the final stage of offensive, the preliminary form of armed guerilla resistance behind the enemy's rear becomes auxiliary to the regular warfare. The failure to understand these aspects and attempt either to skip over the preliminary and difficult stages or to stick to one form of struggle when a change for the other becomes necessary and possible, is harmful for the revolution; the former would lead either to helpless passivity or adventurist gamble and the latter leads to defensist disruption.

In this connection another important aspect always to be borne in mind is that while conducting this form of protracted armed struggle, there might arise a situation whereat the liberated bases might be occupied by the enemy's overwhelming armed forces and have to be transformed into guerilla districts and resistance areas for a time; similarly, a situation might arise whereat even after the formation of regular armies, we may be required to disband these regular formations to be deployed extensively for partisan warfare and again mobilise them into regular standing armies when conditions demand and permit that course.

While adopting this form of struggle, it would be simply utopian and schematic to visualise a straight line advance from resistance areas to liberated areas or from partisan squads to standing armies. Depending upon the course of the revolution and the alignment of forces on the side of the revolution and counter-revolution, the stages of this form of armed struggle will change from a preliminary partisan warfare to a higher stage and vice versa or liberated areas to resistance areas and vice versa; if one fails to understand this zigzag course of armed struggle, it would lead to many dangers. For example, if in every territory we start this form of warfare, if we attempt to establish liberated bases and cling on to them before the overwhelming enemy strength, it will only lead to the decimation of our forces. In the same way, if one attempts to risk the entire forces to keep a liberated area as a liberated area when a retreat is necessitated; it would destroy the revolutionary forces. Likewise, when regular army formations face

the danger of frontal attacks and encirclements, to attempt to keep them intact and continue the positional warfare without disbanding them and deploying them into mobile units and partisan squads is simply suicidal.

These are only some of the very broad outlines. Unless our party, along with the correct political line, also learns and masters the military line of this type of armed warfare, it cannot lead to a successful conclusion of our national-liberation struggle.

Fourthly, the problem of establishment of liberation bases is to be constantly kept in mind and a resolute struggle to realise them has to be carried on because without liberated bases guerilla warfare of such a protracted and cruel nature cannot be continued for long.

The topographical and terrain conditions occupy a great prominence, besides the political, economic and social and such other objective factors, when the question of liberation bases comes into serious consideration.

No set of rigid rules can be framed except to state that the mountainous and forest areas, which offer exceptionally favourable conditions, occupy the first place; next, the territories, which are crisscrossed with rivers, lakes, etc. also offer protection, making the speedy movement of the enemy difficult. The plains come under the last category, where it is extremely difficult to create liberated bases, especially in the earlier periods of armed warfare when the enemy's forces are far superior to those of revolutionary forces.

However it should never be generalised and concluded from the foregoing, and it would be a great mistake to do so, that armed guerilla resistance is only possible in forest and mountainous areas and impossible in plains. It is wrong, in the first place, to confuse the question of creation of liberated bases with the question of partisan guerilla resistance; and secondly, the comparatively greater difficulties and risks to conduct armed resistance in plains should never be equated with the idea of impossibility of partisan resistance. If a suitable mass programme of action is taken up, if proper organisational steps are worked out, if flexible fighting methods are evolved, if people in the area are roused for the revolutionary implementation of agrarian reforms, there is no other

effective form of resistance than armed resistance and it is quite possible to carry on armed resistance in all the above territories.

Finally, it is necessary to clearly grasp the truth that the armed struggle has become the principal form of struggle in the present agrarian revolutionary stage that our national-liberation movement has grown to. It would be erroneous to think that this principal form is the only form of struggle because without simultaneously adopting and coordinating all other conceivable forms of struggle, such as the economic and political strikes, demonstrations, agricultural labour and tenant struggles, signature collections for peace pledge, election contests and so on and so forth, the armed struggle alone can neither be conducted for long nor ultimately can success be attained.

The fact that armed struggle has become the principal form of struggle for our revolutionary movement in our country for this period and the objective conditions exist today in our land for the people to take to this form of struggle, does not mean that the *entire* people *all over* the land have already begun the armed struggle or would begin the moment we issue this slogan. Such simplified understanding can only emanate either from sheer ignorance about this form of struggle or from the illusions that still persist in the insurrectionary form of struggle. It only means that the revolutionary forces can defend, exist and further advance at this stage of our struggle for national liberation by adopting armed resistance as the principal form for the simple reason that armed counterrevolution cannot be successfully resisted and defeated except through an armed struggle.

Whether a particular form of struggle becomes the principal form or not is only decided by the role it plays in *decisively advancing* the revolution and the absence of which *decisively retards* the progress of the revolution and throws it backwards.

The armed struggle remains the main form and does not cease to be so even though the party is immediately capable of organising and conducting it over a large or small territory—whether it is half or one-tenth or one-twentieth part of our country, it remains and does not cease to be so even though the stage and form of this armed struggle or its extensiveness is a preliminary stage of guerilla resistance.

The revolutionary significance of armed struggle as the principal form of struggle can only be understood by the political and revolutionary content of it in a given stage of the revolution but not by an arithmetical calculation of the proportion of forms of struggle that the revolutionary forces adopt at different places and in different conditions in the given period as a whole. For example, in Telangana during the last three years and more, our party has led struggles on a number of issues in which other forms of struggle than this principal form of armed struggle have been adopted in the majority of instances and in the greater part of the territory too. All the same armed struggle remains the principal form with which all other forms of struggle were coordinated.

To deny the armed struggle, under whatever pretext, as the principal form of struggle before the people's democratic revolution in India in the present period, is nothing short of denying and questioning the whole set of relations obtaining today, such as the existence of colonial slave order, deepening postwar crisis, the mass upsurge, the existing of the organised revolutionary working class and the Communist Party, the changed correlation of forces in the postwar period in the world, the brutal armed offensive of the counterrevolutionary alliance of imperialism and native reaction with a view to liquidate the vanguard forces of the revolution. Again, to confuse the concrete question of when, where and how the armed struggle as the principal form of struggle *for this period* is to be guilty of failing to understand both the slogan and its concrete application.

So far we have broadly discussed the outline of the concept of the armed guerilla struggle as the principal form of struggle for this period and stage of revolution. Before concluding this topic, we would like to refer to some of the points that a number of comrades, who accept this form of struggle on principle, have been raising in the form of doubts and questions which require some clarity.

The nature of these doubts and questions is briefly as follows:

*Is armed guerilla struggle to be organised where a strong party and consolidated mass organisation are in existence? Is it to be launched in the extremely backward and feudal regions?*

Is it to proceed first from unleashing partial struggles on



such issues as agricultural labour wages, food, tenants' rights, etc. culminating in armed struggle and in land distribution? Or are we to take up land distribution and armed struggle simultaneously? Is it not a precondition that modern arms are procured first and political and military training on guerilla methods is given before resorting to armed struggle? Is the armed struggle possible only on territories where the national question has become a burning issue as in Telangana and Andhra? These and similar other questions are often raised by comrades in all sincerity.

But this way of approaching the problem of organising the guerilla struggle or answering each of these questions by 'yes' or 'no' would lead us nowhere near the practical approach to this issue. These questions and doubts are of the nature that they only touch the surface of the problem and attack this issue from different angles, without taking the *whole issue* by the horns.

An examination of our own experience would help us better than a volume of academic replies to all the questions raised.

For example, Tripura state, on the border of Assam, where the people have taken up armed struggle in the recent period, offers us one experience. In Tripura, our party unit is a small unit, not exceeding half-a-dozen members in the actual fighting zone. There are no strong class or mass organisations under our leadership. There the basic objective factor being the wide agrarian discontent, the struggle had burst out under the slogan of 'land to the tillers' and democratic rights of the state people. When the Congress government resorted to armed suppression, the freedom-loving people looked for the political, ideological and organisational guidance of the Communist Party. To show them a way to resist armed repression and defend themselves, our party comrades there on their own have taken the task to guide and lead it and place before them the path of armed guerilla resistance. Now a dogged and bitter resistance is going on with whatever arms the people can produce and they are heroically defending themselves and their interests against the savage armed attacks of the government. The party's prestige is growing, the basis for building a mass party and class and mass organisations is laid and has been widened and offers us the prospect of making it a strong guerilla base.

If such is our experience in Tripura where armed guerilla re-

sistance has become possible, the case of Kerala where our party is a hundred times stronger even today, where a more mature states' people's movement is in existence, where the downtrodden peasantry under feudal and semifeudal burdens is seething with discontent, where the national problem is acute, where during the 10 to 15 years of our militant mass struggles, strong trade union and kisan organisations have been built, where the terror rule of the Congress government is running riot for the last two and a half years and more, and where exceptionally suited topographical and terrain conditions exist for waging a guerilla war—in such a province of Kerala, our party unit there is not yet able to advance this form of struggle in the people to adopt and conduct it.

This is another experience.

To take another instance of Bihar, where the national problem as such does not exist in the *acute*st form as in the cases of Andhra, Kerala, Karnataka and Maharashtra, etc. the peasantry, deprived of land and food, has begun to rise for a revolutionary seizure of foodgrains. Our party unit, though not very strong in the province as a whole and weak too in the particular zones of this acutest crisis, is putting before the people the slogan of armed guerilla resistance against the punitive expeditions and military attacks of the government; organising and conducting to the best of its understanding and capacities. If our party unit there can successfully head this people's upsurge, correctly meet the political, organisational and technical tasks, effectively popularise and implement the slogan of armed resistance and master to utilise and coordinate all other forms of struggle with this, there is every prospect of a successful building up of a people's democratic front, a strong party and strong mass organisations, exposing and isolating the treacherous social-democracy that is conspiring to cheat the people and bag them.

It is needless to discuss here the experiences of Andhra, Telangana, hill border regions of Mymensingh, etc. which have been discussed enough in the previous chapters and separate fuller reports as information documents are already placed in the hands of party members.

In the light of these experiences, it is not only difficult but impossible and also wrong to attempt to issue such directives as

to when to begin, where to begin and how to begin, etc. in this statement of our policy.

It might be possible that our comrades in Nepal, where there is only a small and young party unit, may be able to successfully utilise the present national upsurge and the struggle that is going on there, boldly advocate this form of struggle and adopt it as and when the conditions are mature. The Nepali people, militant by tradition, inspired by the victories of the liberation army of China on their borders, might in a short time take to this guerilla form of struggle before some other territories in India where the party and people's movement are stronger, will be able to take up this form of struggle due to several reasons.

Similarly, our party unit in Kashmir—though today extremely small and weak—may be able to advance this slogan among the people of Kashmir as to make them adopt it in the face of the Congress and League's betrayal and mortally-threatening domination of Anglo-American imperialists. The Kashmiri people gripped with terrible agrarian discontent, a powerful urge for national selfdetermination and with heroic traditions of glorious anti-feudal, anti-imperialist struggles may be able to take up armed struggle for agrarian reforms and national independence. Such possibilities exist and nobody can rule them out in the present rapidly-developing situation. Neither overoptimistic prophesies nor pessimistic and defeatist denials would lead us any further in the matter. But a concrete study of each case and a correct application of the political line alone settles the question.

*The question of party and mass organisations:* The task of organising guerilla warfare and conducting it, is undoubtedly an extremely difficult one which requires constant and correct efforts in organisation and training. As Lenin points out in relation to partisan warfare:

"This is a difficult task, there is no doubt about it. It cannot be accomplished at once. Just as the whole people are being re-trained and are learning to fight in course of the civil war, so our organisations must be trained, must be reconstructed in conformity with the lessons of experience for the performance of this task."

This incontrovertible truth does apply with all its force and implications in our case. Our party and mass organisations today,

in face of terrible onslaught from the ruling clique and due to our failure to adopt a correct strategy and tactics—a correct method of organisation and resistance, have been landed to a very critical situation. The party is seriously disorganised; the mass organisations almost out of existence *in form*. But from this disorganisation of the party and nonexistence of the mass organisations in form, to conclude that everything of the party and the revolutionary movement has gone out of existence is simply a liquidationist evaluation. The truth is that the years of work that the party has conducted in different territories and the revolutionary consciousness it has roused among the people, their loyalty to the red flag and their revolutionary urge for land, bread, freedom and peace have not gone out of existence. And they can be galvanised and reorganised only if a proper and correct political line is there and the proper form of organisation and struggle, suited to the condition, are adopted. Without adopting such a course, they can neither fulfil their revolutionary task of the period, nor can their forms be maintained to carry out the task. Undoubtedly the present line of the party and the task of the period require a higher form of organisation than we have so far been accustomed to.

*The problem of cadres:* This is essentially a people's form of struggle. It is wrong to base our calculation for beginning, developing and carrying it to success on the number of our party members without taking into consideration the millions of workers and peasants who have again and again fought innumerable glorious battles under the red flag and who stand as inexhaustible reserves of the revolutionary forces. The problem of cadres for the guerilla armed struggle can only be solved if we keep the following precious enunciation of Mao in our view:

“There is not an unfathomable gap between a common man and a soldier and he can be a soldier in a minute if he wishes to do so. It does not matter whether or not you are common man and your ability to engage in a battle of words is even an asset. When you are organised, you become a part of the army, and when you shoulder your gun you become a soldier. Guerilla warfare is a military college and a few trials on the battlefield would transform you into a complete general” (“Aspects of China's Anti-Jap Struggle”).

*Training and arms:* For conducting the armed guerilla warfare successfully, the problem of training and arms has to be correctly understood and tackled. Wherever the condition demands and permits the taking up of this form of struggle, the party should organise a minimum preliminary necessary training of the party members and the worker and peasant militants so as to equip them with certain fundamentals of the theoretical and practical aspect of the struggle. Same way, the arms also have to be procured and a special effort has to be made. However the principles of training and procurement of arms are of a special nature for this form of warfare. The master strategist who headed and guided this form of struggle for more than 20 years, teaches us thus:

“Though it is difficult for a guerilla force to acquire arms and munitions, especially in the beginning of its formation, the problem is not insoluble. A guerilla force created out of a civilian population would, as a rule, be equipped in the initial stage with nine-cartridge guns, native guns, shot guns, spears, lances, big swords, native cannons, pine-tree cannons, native mines and similar primitive weapons and sprinkled with a number of modern rifles. Increase in the quantity as well as the quality of these is to be achieved gradually by acquisition from the enemy as well as the people through numerous battles. The supply of munitions is specially dependent upon the enemy. In this respect surprise attacks on the enemy’s supply columns are the best means, as successful attacks would transform the enemy supply into ours” (Ibid).

*On what issue to begin:* The armed guerilla struggle on some territories may be advocated and initiated under our party’s leadership on the burning issue of food and go to the question of seizure and distribution of land. In some other territories it may take its start as a measure of fight against repression already clamped down or in the process of being clamped down on the people. Again in other places, it may start in defence of partial struggles unleashed on the day-to-day issues of the people. Therefore any cut-and-dried rules for the questions of where, when and how to begin cannot be framed. But on whatever issue the guerilla armed struggle is begun, unless it is linked up with the question of land and people’s power, i.e. village people’s committees, it can neither be sustained for long nor can it be extended and deepened.

*The basic conditions for starting the guerilla armed resistance are:* The peasants' urge for land and their revolutionary fighting mood and their support, a numerically strong or weak party capable of giving them political, ideological and organisational leadership, the armed repression of the class enemy depriving the people of any other effective form of struggle to defend themselves, their hearths and homes and their revolutionary struggles. Besides these basic factors, many other additional factors—favourable and unfavourable—exist and influence this form of struggle either way; but they can never form the *decisive factors* to determine this very form of armed struggle.

It is the task of different provincial, regional and local party leaders to examine in detail the concrete conditions in their respective areas where they function and decide the issue in the light of different experiences of our own country as briefly narrated above and in the light of the invaluable Chinese experience and the experience of Southeast Asian countries where this form of struggle is being waged.

Its importance cannot be described more pointedly than Liu Shao-chi, when he said: "The existence and development of the workingclass organisation and the existence and development of a national united front are closely connected with the existence and development of such an armed struggle."

It is the duty of our party and the people to perfectly understand and utilise the effective form of struggle and advance the revolution to a successful conclusion.

#### VIII. PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC FRONT AND A CORRECT APPROACH FOR BUILDING IT

The people's democratic front is the fighting front of all the anti-imperialist democratic forces, i.e. the workers, peasants, petty bourgeoisie and the middle bourgeoisie, with the parties, groups and individuals representing them. It is based on the firm alliance of the workers and the peasants led by the proletariat and its party, the Communist Party.

The working class and its party—the Communist Party, are the leader, guide and the architect of the people's democratic front. If the party has to fulfil such an historic task, it must have a

thorough understanding of the scope and nature of the people's democratic front. It is therefore necessary to make a diligent study of the experiences of the international proletarian movement on this question; the party must make a study of its own past on this issue drawing proper lessons; it must also master the strategy and tactics of the period and determinedly act to realise the people's democratic front.

In the earlier period, when our party was still young, the dominant tendency inside the party had been sectarian; it refused to work in the then existing trade-union organisations under the reformist leadership and insisted on setting up exclusively separate and independent trade unions, irrespective of the expediency of such a step and the result was a failure to forge a broad trade-union unity—the lever for a national united front against imperialism.

The party refused to recognise the then still existing anti-imperialist role of the national reformist opposition of the Indian big business as represented by the Congress leadership, resulting in the failure to utilise the mass anti-imperialist organisations under Congress leadership, by joining them and working in them. It failed to participate in the anti-imperialist demonstrations and struggles, which were of course conducted under the bourgeois leadership in a typically reformist way, and failed to extend its mass influence.

The serious political, ideological and organisational differences that were prevailing inside the party had seriously impeded the unity of the proletariat and the party; the lack of such a unity had in turn seriously affected the struggle of that period to forge a revolutionary united front. These are in brief the lessons of the early period concerning the problem in discussion.

Following this, during the long period of 1935-48, when we were supposed to have corrected our former sectarian mistakes, we steadily landed ourselves in the reformist mistakes and the entire approach to the problem of united front had suffered serious right-opportunist deviations. Besides a number of other mistakes with regard to our approach to the problem of allies, the main mistake of this period was in our conceding the national big bourgeoisie the character of a *revolutionary opposition* against imperialism. This basic mistake had led us to a number of

errors, resulting in the failure to successfully build a revolutionary united front, a revolutionary workingclass movement and a strong party to assert the proletarian hegemony over the national-liberation movement.

The party leadership, while correctly stressing the necessity of working inside the mass anti-imperialist organisations under the Congress leadership, seriously underrated the significance of the building up of independent class and mass organisations and the party and actually building up of the Congress organisation was made the main plank in many places.

Secondly, while in the former sectarian period, the party refused to utilise the national reformist opposition of the big bourgeoisie to foreign rule, in the latter period of right-reformism in the name of utilising that opposition of the big bourgeoisie, which of course was aggravated by the intensification of the crisis of world capitalism and the consequent rise of fascism, affording the proletariat a greater scope for the sweep of the revolution—we failed not only to expose the treacherous reformist ideology of Gandhism and its bourgeois exponents before the people and isolate them; but also by boosting of Nehru, Gandhi and national leadership to skies had helped to create further illusions in the people.

Thirdly, the party leadership failed to take note of the growing capitulatory tendencies on the part of the Congress leadership towards imperialism, which were particularly marked during the later period of the war itself and became more pronounced in the postwar period and landed itself in enunciating the policy of "Support Nehru government"—a government of compromise, collaboration and national betrayal. Thus when a complete break with and an irreconcilable opposition to the native big bourgeoisie was a historical task of the proletariat, we pursued a policy of united front with it. And the result was the utter failure to fulfil the basic task of building up of a real, fighting united democratic front against both imperialism and native reaction and tailing behind the native big bourgeoisie.

Moreover this right-reformist policy of the party, in the name of such 'national unity', had not only hindered the independent organisation and building up of workers', peasants' and other people's movements but also restricted the scope of the forms of



struggle that were adopted in the workers' and peasants' struggles. Not a few instances could be found during this period—particularly in the later part of it—where militant and higher forms of struggle were discouraged under the pretext of 'inviting repression' and danger of disruption', to forge a so-called united front! This kind of trimming of the sails of the proletariat and its party to suit the vagaries and machinations of the native big bourgeoisie by restricting and confining the forms of struggle to the strictly 'peaceful and normal' methods did neither bring the realisation of a united front anywhere nearer, nor the people were rescued from the illusions of the bourgeois forms of struggle, helping them to take up and advance to higher and revolutionary forms of struggle.

And now, during the last two and a half years beginning with the second party congress during which a definite swing towards the discredited titoist concept of monolithic front was observed (it persisted until the first resolution of the information bureau exposing the activities and policies of the Tito clique was published and circulated) the struggle to correct this right-opportunist attitude towards united front has once again ended in a crude sectarian approach to the entire problem. While correctly breaking away from and taking up an irreconcilable opposition to the collaborationist bourgeoisie, we made a present of some of the democratic sections of the people and our allies such as the middle bourgeoisie and the rich peasantry to the class enemy, thus curtailing the scope and disrupting the formation of a wider united front against imperialist-bigbourgeois-feudal combine which was absolutely necessary and quite possible at this stage.

The party leadership failed to fight the machinations of the big bourgeoisie and the socialists and others to disrupt the working-class unity and to destroy the organised revolutionary working-class movement. Not only the failure to fight out these disruptive moves of reaction and its lackeys but also the insistence on the sectarian organisational and mass front demands and launching of struggles by hurling in the vanguard sections, had only resulted in helping the enemy and failed to achieve the desired workingclass unity.

The forms of struggle that were advocated during this period in the cities were 'putschist' in their nature, which failed to take note

of the growing white terror, with the result that the party failed to unite its class in its struggle on the day-to-day demands, not to speak of a broader unity with other sections of toiling and democratic masses.

In the rural side, besides the disruption caused in the peasant front by the sectarian strategy, the forms of struggle the party leadership advocated were mass frontal clashes with the police and the military. This resulted in giving the upperhand to the enemy and facilitated a speedy smashup of our own forces. Instead of attacking the enemy from different angles and at different times, harassing, wearing out and delivering deadly blows, in short, instead of adopting guerilla partisan warfare as the main form of struggle, the adventurist method of mass frontal clashes were resorted to, which has not only failed to unite the toilers and other sections in the rural areas against the armed offensive of the counterrevolution but only helped the vanguard of the fighting people to get smashed quickly, resulting in the disruption of the existing fighting unity of the people.

To conclude, in brief, if right-reformism advocated and pursued a policy of alliance with the class enemy in the name of 'united front', left-sectarianism refused alliance with the democratic classes and sections; if right-opportunism, reeling before enemy's repression, retreated all along the line and liquidated the struggles, left-adventurism refused to take note of the growing white terror and attempted to push through the classical insurrectionary fighting strategy; if right-reformism underrated the independent role of the proletariat and its mobilisation and tailed behind the bourgeoisie in the united front, left sectarianism, in the name of independent strength, mobilisation and the hegemony of the proletariat, undermined the formation of a united workingclass movement as well as a fighting united front of all democratic classes and groups. Thus the concept of united democratic front, in this period of left-sectarianism, which started during the second congress with the titoist idea of a monolithic front, finally landed in the absurd and vulgar liquidation of the very revolutionary understanding of a united democratic front in our country's war of liberation.

Drawing on these lessons, it is necessary to restate briefly the correct viewpoint regarding the people's democratic front.

The people's democratic front the party visualises is a united front of workers, peasants, petty bourgeoisie and middle bourgeoisie, and the parties and groups representing them, based on the minimum programme of our party and the fight for its realisation. Such minimum programme, in the opinion of the revolutionary proletariat and the Communist Party, shall contain all the basic demands that have been enumerated in the previous section as the immediate programme of the people's democratic revolution. The Communist Party, while persistently fighting for the acceptance of this minimum programme by all the allies in the front, does not demand of these allied classes or parties and groups representing them, the acceptance of the party's maximum programme, i.e. socialism. The party which has a single accepted ideology of Marxism-Leninism, has its own discipline based on democratic centralisation, and is agreed upon both maximum and minimum programmes, can alone be correctly characterised as monolithic. It would be utter nonsense to speak of a united front of several anti-imperialist and antifeudal classes as a monolithic organisation. And any insistence on the monolithic character of the united front would result either in liquidating the party by merging it in the front, and in sacrificing its independent existence as is evidenced in Yugoslavia or the front would get disrupted because of the insistence of such a monolithic nature.

The people's democratic front that the party visualises is a united front of armed struggle. Without such a front, the present ruling bloc of imperialists and their native satellites can never be defeated and overthrown from power and the realisation of a people's democratic order under which alone the successful implementation of the people's democratic front's programme is possible and fully realisable, can only be achieved through a united front of armed struggle.

But such a front on a countrywide scale cannot come into existence all at once. The development of such a front is a process of struggle for unity in action—beginning from joint demonstrations or action for the most easily understood demands of the different sections to the highest form of struggle for peace, land, bread and independence on a more permanent basis.

The most effective way to build such a front is to build it from below. It does not preclude agreements at the top between

leaders and individuals of different organisations and parties. Such agreements often become essential to facilitate unity from below. But to achieve this, the party has to systematically and persistently approach the different left parties, groups and individuals, patiently argue and thrash out the differing viewpoints and evolve the common basis of agreement for action. While doing so, the party has, at the same time, to expose the activities of the disruptive leaders before their ranks and masses and fight in a determined manner the influence of bourgeois nationalism that persists in them.

The people's democratic front can be materialised only if the proletariat and the Communist Party simultaneously fight for the just democratic demands of all the allied classes and groups on the one hand, and on the other, resist and fight back the vacillations, illusions and the narrow, sectional undemocratic demands against the proletariat and the people either by one or more of the allies in the front or the party or parties representing them. The building of such a united front and the struggle to realise it does not proceed over a straight and smoothly paved road on which all democratic forces can march in unison but over a difficult and strenuous path of unity and struggle within and sometimes without. Of course it will neither be an irreconcilable struggle as between two hostile classes, trying to destroy each other nor a unity which excludes all struggle whatsoever.

The independence of the proletariat and the party for mobilisation and action is an indispensable condition for a successful building up of a people's democratic front. The independent strength and mobilisation of the proletariat and the party is the real lever on and the pivot around which the fighting unity of the democratic classes can be forged at all. The party, bearing this truth in mind, has to undeviatingly act up to it. Consistent with this, the party neither demands the liquidation of other parties as a precondition to join the united front nor allows any such disruptive demands foisted on it by any class or classes and the party or parties in this democratic alliance.

The party would be prepared to work in cooperation with all the democratic and left parties, groups and their mass organisations and to invite them to join the people's democratic front. It reserves the right to criticise any individual, group or party which

opposes, sabotages or disrupts a united action or the formation of such a united front. While it would reckon with the existing realities by recognising, cooperating and uniting with all the democratic left parties, it does not take upon itself the task of encouraging, forming and building up of such parties. The party on its own will simultaneously carry on the struggle to unite all the democratic classes under the direct leadership of the proletariat.

Our party in its struggle to build the people's democratic front of armed struggle, reserves the right of propaganda and practice for the armed guerilla warfare as the principal form of struggle at the present stage of our national-liberation movement. But it neither chooses or attempts to foist this form of struggle on the classes or parties that are not yet convinced of it nor allows itself to be dictated to by the other parties on their own reformist forms of struggle which they may believe as effective.

The party firmly believes that the efficacy of armed struggle can be best demonstrated as to make it acceptable by other parties, classes and groups in the democratic front if only it implements it basing on its own independent strength wherever and whenever it is capable of mobilising people for organising such struggles. In areas and territories where such armed resistance develops, the party visualises the alliance of different anti-imperialist parties and groups and the evolution of the people's democratic front of armed struggle comprising them on a local or territorial basis which in the process of development and expansion, will assume wider and wider character.

The party does neither make the acceptance of any particular form of struggle by other parties a precondition for either a united action or united front nor accepts the demand of giving up the armed struggle if demanded by others as a condition for the united front. As already explained in the foregoing pages, the party certainly takes up other forms of struggle also, wherever they are necessary and possible, as auxiliary to this main form. Accordingly the party would not only utilise all other conceivable legal and semilegal forms of struggle, but also co-operate in the forms of struggle the other parties would adopt in conducting mass struggles, even though the party believes that they are not really effective forms. While participating in them,

it expresses its criticism on these forms and patiently explains it to the fighting people and the parties concerned. Thus the forms of struggle it pursues and adopts from issue to issue are flexible so that a really revolutionary united front of armed struggle is created and developed.

Such, in brief, is our broad concept of a fighting people's democratic front.

## **VIII**

### **Letter to All Party Members and Sympathisers**

As you have already learned from a press statement, a meeting of the central committee of the Communist Party of India was held in December 1950, with the participation of those members of the central committee elected at the second party congress, who for various reasons could not attend the May-June meeting of the CC. Some of the resolutions adopted at the meeting have already been sent to the press. Other resolutions are being sent to the party units.

The meeting adopted only those resolutions on which there was broad general agreement, though one or two comrades expressed dissent on some points. On issues on which sharp differences revealed themselves, no resolutions were adopted.

In order to appraise the work of this meeting, it is necessary to keep in mind the situation in which it was being held.

The meeting took place in the background of the gravest crisis in the history of our party, a crisis created by our inability to resolve the sharp political differences that have arisen in the party. There have been, as comrades know, different interpretations of the LPPD editorial of 27 January 1950, different estimations of the national-political situation and the immediate tasks facing the party.

This letter of the (December 1950) central committee was issued on 18 December 1950.

Many of these differences have been formulated and elaborated in documents that are there already before party members and more documents on the subject will be circulated. It is not our purpose in this letter to describe these differences as they are already known to party members.

The fact however cannot be ignored that the unresolved conflict on political and organisational issues has virtually paralysed the party and has reduced it to a state of passivity at a period when mighty events are taking place in the national and international arenas, when mass radicalisation has reached tremendous heights and when great possibilities have opened up before the working class and the party to unite our entire people in the struggle for freedom, democracy and peace. At a period when the communist parties all over the world are leading great battles against the imperialist warmongers and are emerging as the decisive force in their own countries, uniting ever-broader sections of their people and breaking the shackles of imperialist rule, our party stands disunited and virtually immobilised.

This has caused deep concern to large sections of our people and to our brother parties. It has given rise to deep discontent and frustration in our own ranks and bred a spirit of distrust and lack of confidence. Simultaneously the urge has grown, as seen in the resolutions of several important units, that the growing disintegration of the party must be arrested, that the minimum unity must be restored for the carrying out of immediate tasks, that the disastrous drift towards a total breakup of the party must be checked.

All of us who took part in the meeting were conscious of the gravity of the innerparty situation, conscious of the danger of a total breakup of the party and also of the deep urge for unity. We were therefore determined to strain every nerve to evolve ways and means to restore the minimum unity in the party despite the sharp political differences that existed in order that the struggle for a



correct political line could be carried on in a proper manner and atmosphere and the party could discharge its immediate responsibilities in relation to our people.

We had decided to hold the meeting for at least 15 days. We found however that for certain reasons the meeting had to be finished in six days. This made it impossible to discuss the vital political differences that had arisen. This fact must be kept in mind by comrades when they judge the decisions of this meeting.

In a communist party, real organisational unity can be achieved only on the basis of a unified political line, the innerparty crisis can be resolved only on the basis of a correct understanding of the causes of the crisis. It became very clear however during the preliminary discussions in the CC meeting that on these very points sharp differences continued to exist as before.

Most of the CC members (June CC) continued to hold the opinion that the political line as formulated in the "CC Letter to the Party Members", though it suffered from lags, was basically correct and that the party crisis was mainly due to the activities of those who did not accept that line and were attacking it from a reformist understanding of the LPPD editorial. Those who criticised the CC line maintained that the CC had misinterpreted and distorted the meaning of the LPPD editorial, that the CC line was left-sectarian and adventurist and that the party crisis was mainly due to the efforts of the CC to implement the wrong line. There were comrades who were critical of both lines. It became clear that no agreement on these vital issues was possible. It was realised that only the help of brother parties and the holding of a party congress could lead to the evolution of a unified political line.

The question that inevitably arose was whether the meeting should disperse after cataloguing the political stand of the CC members and invitees and entrust the CC as reconstituted in June to prepare for the party congress and carry on work in the meantime. Alternately, whether

those who had opposed the CC line should, by themselves take over these tasks and responsibilities. Though these questions were not formally raised in the CC meeting, they were discussed among comrades informally and everyone agreed that either of the courses would be disruptive of the unity of the party and worsen the inner-party situation.

If the protagonists of either line had been convinced that their line was bound to have international support, that they were in a position to unify the party as a whole and discharge the tasks and responsibilities in this critical period, then they could have taken over the responsibility. In view of the repeated mistakes that each one of us has committed all these years, in view of the theoretical and political immaturity of each one of us having been exposed again and again, in view of the seriousness of the inner-party crisis when the party seems almost evenly divided on the political issues and many comrades do not fully support either of the two major trends, none of us could have that confidence. We had also to consider what effect any change would have in the areas where the party is engaged in a life-and-death struggle. Everyone of us therefore felt the need for more effective guidance and help from our brother parties.

The object that we set before ourselves therefore was to formulate those immediate political and organisational tasks on which there was broad general agreement and to bring about such changes in the central leadership as were essential to carry out these tasks to expedite the task of receiving fuller international guidance and prepare for the party congress on the basis of thorough innerparty discussion.

The meeting resolved to place the building of the unity of the left parties as one of the main tasks before the party and to demand the immediate holding of general elections and the full restoration of civil liberties.

It adopted a resolution on trade-union work with the building of the unity of the working class as the key task.

No agreed resolution could be drafted on agrarian struggles.

The CC adopted a resolution on Korea and resolved to work out a policy of mobilising the people for peace on the basis of the decisions of the Warsaw congress.

It resolved that every effort must be made to defend the cause of the Telangana fighters and that no comrade should issue slogans of withdrawal of Telangana in the press.

It resolved to readmit into the party all those comrades who had been unjustly expelled during the period between the second party congress and June 1950. (Practically no expulsions have taken place after June.) It resolved to readmit into the party Patkar, Tambitkar and others, as well as Sane, Bhayyaji and others of Maharashtra and reconstitute the Bombay and Maharashtra committees.

It reopened the case of P. C. Joshi and referred it to a commission of two comrades. A commission was appointed to inquire into the conduct of B. T. Ranadive and other four PBMs against whom serious charges have been made. In the meantime, these comrades are not to hold any responsible position. The agit-prop committee formed in June therefore gets automatically dissolved. A third commission has been appointed to inquire into the case of Ravi Narayan Reddy who was expelled by the Andhra PC. All these commissions have been asked to finish their work as speedily as possible.

A commission has already inquired into the allegations against Dange for alleged connection with Tito agents and squashed the charges. The CC accepted the commission's verdict.

The CC also corrected certain mistakes in recent party documents about "freezing of funds" and about the responsibility of a sympathiser in continuing the Tanjug agency.

The CC decided that provincial conferences should be convened at the end of about 3 months and the party congress should meet in 6 months' time. The exact procedure for holding these conferences would be conveyed later.

The agreement that was reached on these political and organisational issues of immediate importance naturally brought the question of a united centre to the forefront. To give effect to the above decisions, to ensure that the resolutions are implemented, to maintain the minimum degree of party unity, to reactivate the party and to convene the party congress, the formation of a united centre was absolutely necessary. Concretely it meant such enlargement of the CC and such reconstitution of the PB that the major trends are adequately represented.

Moreover these leading bodies have to be such as would reflect the entire collective experience of the party. One of the factors that has aggravated the innerparty crisis is that comrades in different areas, and having led different types of struggles, have acquired different experiences and the tendency has grown to base oneself on one's own experience alone and ignore or minimise the importance of the experiences of others. The need for a collective leadership is there in every party, but all the more so in our country where conditions vary so widely, where problems are so different in different areas and where it has not been possible so far for the party to assimilate the entire experience and evolve a line for the whole country.

Finally, these leading bodies have to be such as would command the maximum confidence in the party as it is today all over the country.

It was on the basis of these considerations that the changes in the central committee and polit bureau were effected.

Somnath Lahiri had, even before the CC meeting, offered his resignation from CC. His resignation was accepted. Ranen Sen, who did not want to be in the CC, was persuaded to remain. Jyoti Basu, a member of the old CC, explained why he did not want to be in the new CC and his explanation was accepted. The CC therefore had to be formed with 8 members of the existing CC, 5 out of the 6 former CCMs who had attended the meeting and a ve-

teran comrade from Bengal.\* A comrade from Tamilnadu is to be added after consultation with the Tamilnadu comrades. The new PB consists of Rajeswara Rao, E. M. S. Namboodiripad, S. S. Yusuf, Ajoy Ghosh and S. A. Dange. Basavapunniah was relieved at his own request and replaced by Namboodiripad. Biresh Misra did not want to remain in the PB. Rajeswara Rao continues to be the general secretary.

Formed on the basis of representation of divergent political trends and in order to carry out the limited tasks before them, the CC and PB cannot be what these bodies are expected to be and must be in a communist party. They have to function today under the limitations imposed by the present state of the innerparty crisis.

We have placed before the comrades frankly and fully what considerations weighed with us in arriving at these decisions. We are fully conscious of the criticism that can be made of them. We want to stress however that we were all convinced that not to take these steps would have worsened the innerparty situation, might have led to a total break up of the party and the destruction of all that has been built by the selfsacrificing work of so many years. We had to devise means by which the struggle for a correct political line could be carried on without destroying the unity of the party itself, the present state of paralysis could be speedily ended and a party congress convened in the shortest possible time. We have every reason to believe that the political and organisational decisions we have taken are correct in the existing conditions and are essential.

Comrades would naturally like to know why the re-organisation of the CC and PB was not done on the basis of criticism and selfcriticism of the PB and CC members as

\*This CC of 13 consisted of C. Rajeswara Rao, D. Venkateswara Rao, P. Sundarayya, M. Basavapunniah, E.M.S. Namboodiripad, Biresh Misra, Moni Singh and S. V. Parulekar from the June CC and Ajoy Ghosh, S. A. Dange, S. V. Ghate, Ranen Sen, Muzaffar Ahmad and S. S. Yusuf from the earlier second congress CC.

well as the former CCMs, as is always done in units of the Communist Party. The basic reason is that in the absence of a unified political line and in the absence of a political-organisational report based on that line, such thorough criticism and selfcriticism was not possible except in cases where it was considered essential to correct certain factual errors that had crept in recent PB documents. A proper political-organisational report on the party crisis as well as the work of the PB and the CC will be prepared and circulated in the ranks before the party congress.

Having stated the causes that led us to adopt the course that we adopted, we want to clarify certain other points:

A letter from the CPGB political committee headed by R. P. Dutt containing notes for discussion was received by the PB in the beginning of October. In the covering note of the letter which has now been circulated in the ranks, the CC, as reconstituted in May, has given its explanation as to why this letter was not circulated earlier.

It should be stated here that Lahiri, a member of the reconstituted CC, had wanted the letter to be circulated immediately after it was received. The PB however wanted it to be first placed before the CC. As for the ex-CC members, who attended the meeting, they were all of the opinion that the letter was an extremely important contribution towards a correct understanding of the LPPD editorial, that it raised very important political and organisational issues which were being discussed in the party ranks and as such it should have been released to the party ranks immediately after it had been received. They stressed at the very beginning of the CC meeting that it must now be released without delay.

The majority of the members of reconstituted CC (June) however wanted to secure the approval of R. P. Dutt himself before releasing the letter and arrangement was being made by them to secure this approval when message arrived from a responsible sympathiser that R. P. Dutt himself wanted the letter to be discussed in the party ranks

and that it had been so released. On this, the letter was circulated.

We are stating these bare facts without any comment.

As regards the contents of the letter, though it could not be fully discussed in the CC, it was clear that sharp differences exist among those who took part in the meeting as to whether the criticism made in the letter of the CPGB is correct, and if so, to what extent. The question is now before the comrades and final verdict of the party congress,

We want to inform comrades in this connection that every effort is being made by all of us to contact RPD again to clarify certain points and obtain the guidance and help of other brother parties also and we have every reason to hope that such guidance and help will be given.

We do not expect comrades to be satisfied with the extremely inadequate political guidance that has been given in the resolutions, nor with the organisational changes we have made. We want to assure them however that whatever differences existed—there was complete agreement on one basic point: the unity of the party must be maintained, the struggle for a correct line must be conducted in such a way as not to impair that unity. Bearing this in mind, comrades should judge the decisions of our meeting and criticise them, if they are incorrect.

We do not expect comrades to hail all our decisions. We know they can be criticised from many angles. But we do expect from all comrades genuine cooperation and such criticism of our work as will help us to unify the party and discharge our duties and responsibilities at this critical hour. Without such help and such criticism, we shall not be able to carry out even the minimum tasks that we have set before ourselves. We also expect that the party units will seriously restart mass work on the basis of the resolutions that have been adopted at this meeting, speedily ending the present state of paralysis of the party.

We are confident that all party units and all comrades will respond to this appeal in the spirit in which it is

being made. We hope they will help us to restore party solidarity, conduct struggle for a correct line without mutual recrimination and guard the unity of the party. With such cooperation from our comrades and with the guidance and aid of our brother parties, we hope to resolve the present crisis speedily and go forward to the task of leading the battle of our class and our people, for freedom, democracy and peace.





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